Mysteries of Alchemy

Merelle

THE MYSTERIES OF ALCHEMY

by Merelle

Translated into English by Olè Jensen

Contents:

THE HERETIC SCIENCE
Prejudices and opinions on alchemy

THE MAGIC CHEMISTRY OF NATURE
Old knowledge of the Lunar Powers

A KINGS VISION
The Dragon and its significance

THE RED SPRING
The cruel history of Iron

THE BLUE MOON METAL
The Wondrous Being of Silver

THE ROSE AND THE CROSS
Blood and tears, victory and defeat

FAIRY TALES AND ALCHEMY
Mythic animals and allegorical beings

THE PHILOSOPHERS STONE
About the production of the magic red powder

THE ELUSIVE SMILE OF THE CHESHIRE CAT
Isaac Newton's alchemical illusion

THE ENIGMATIC SPHINX
The code of a secret science

THE ANCIENT MATTER CLAY
Natures obedient slave

POSTSCRIPT
Another world

MAGIC AND SCIENCE

Translator's Preface (2002)

In 1990 (Year of publishing is not on the book) there appeared in the Danish language a small and modest, but quite remarkable if not extraordinary book on Alchemy, by the female Danish alchemist, Merelle. A pseudonym taken after Nicholas Flamel's wife, Pernelle, and the French name for the ocean, La Mer, and the sea shell of the same name referred to by Fulcanelli.

The book was published in an edition of 500 copies, and is now impossible to find.

The author expresses herself in a plain and simple language void of sophistry and obscure phrasings. Merelle refers to various sources, Fulcanelli, J.R. Glauber, Grimm's fairy tales, Jung, and others; her reasoning and Modus Operandi are laid out in a simple and easily understandable Way. And this is documented with color photographs in the book. The only other book known to us that does so is Kmala Jnana's (Roger Caro/Max Duval), *Cinnober Path.*

Extra ordinary, because this was accomplished after less than a decade of Alchemical pursuit. This should be an inspiration and encouragement for any dabbler in Alchemy.

Merelle insists that if one works seriously with Alchemy, the Way to the Stone will reveal itself to those who are worthy. And that the Path need not be so difficult and complicated as some might think. Those of modest means can play along here if they Truly desire so.

This work should be of interest for the Lovers of Art, as it seems she has succeeded in producing a "Stone," that has the power to Transmute, and there are photographs in the book of the Stone and its Transmuted product. Apparently, she has not tested the Stone for its Medical Virtue, nor is it clear, if the Stone is a Universal Stone, or one specified for the Mineral Kingdom.

Whether Merelle's Work can be called a Particular or a Universal remains to be seen; we can and will not pass any verdict on this at present.

Can we then call her an Adept?

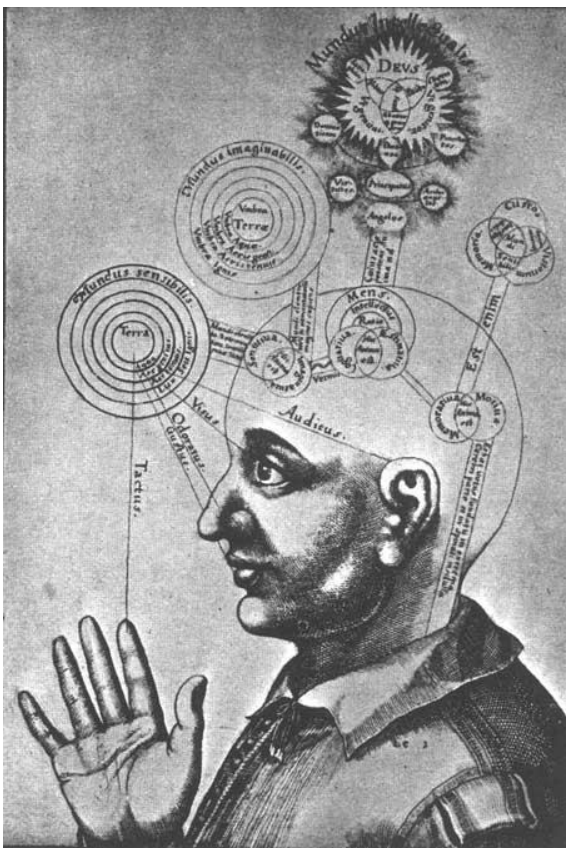
Yes! If we by Adept understand someone who is Able!

FAIRY TALE AND RELIGION

Alchemy is an ancient technical and esoteric knowledge that in our day and age for the greatest part lies hidden in the form of myths, fairy tales, and incomprehensible symbols.

On the physical level, the principles of alchemy are integrated into among other things the medieval cathedrals.

Alchemy is the art of making gold from common metals, but none of the books that have been written about the topic throughout the centuries have revealed the whole secret. The relatively simple process that leads to the Philosopher's Stone—the matter that can transmute a metal's atomic structure into gold—is still a secret known only by a few.



But just as important as the physical process of transmutation that changes vulgar metals into noble ones is the spiritual transformational process that the alchemist goes through.

In our time especially the Swiss psychiatrist C. G. Jung has occupied himself with the relationship between the complicated processes within the human psyche and the fascinating symbolic language of the alchemists.

Being occupied with alchemy can be seen as an evolutionary process of self development where spiritual and physical work go hand in hand, and when successful leads to (w)holistic insight and integration.

Mérelle is the pseudonym of a contemporary female alchemist, who has succeeded in this work.

In this book she relates about the methods of the alchemists and reveals the path that leads to unity of the physical and spiritual for those who are willing to do the work.

THE HERETIC SCIENCE (FOREWORD)

To be an alchemist or even to give the slightest hint that one is engaged in that kind of hokus-pokus can usually cause good citizens to smile overbearingly, for alchemy isn't something that one can take seriously in our age. So that usually settles the matter, but it has not always been so.

During the medieval age it was a dubious affair to be involved in the production of gold—which is one of the issues in alchemy—and if an alchemist did succeed in producing gold, he or she could count on having a stormy and uneasy life from then on.

The medieval age had both its male and female alchemists, but most preferred to remain anonymous, and they still continue to do so.

There are several reasons why alchemists will not step forward and reveal that they are trying to make gold—or even have done so—for it is with gold as it is with guns: both can have a highly demoralizing effect on weak souls and bring forth their worst sides. This has been the experience of alchemists through the ages, and the wisest of them kept their knowledge and ability to themselves.

Besides, and this might be the most essential part, gold cannot be made in our days skeptics say, for it is an unchangeable element, and so it will remain.

Therefore one cannot sell gold that has been made in an artificial manner, or in other words, "homemade." For customs and authorities need to see both the name and address of those that buy and sell precious metals, and if the papers are not in order you are doomed.

If one sells it anyway then one is a criminal that cannot account for the gold.

This is the case in a nutshell. Nevertheless alchemists have through all ages dared to claim that gold can be made, and this being even the finest and purest 24 karat gold. It can be done by a trick, and manipulation of natural laws.

What should one believe for here statement stands against statement? This in itself is very exciting and challenging, and the disbelievers have never stopped a budding alchemist from attempting the process.

But what is alchemy actually? The best explanation given could be the one that stems from the German chemist, doctor and alchemist, J. R. Glauber, who lived in the 17th century. He is no longer remembered as an alchemist, but as the chemist that discovered karlsbadersalt, which in our days is called sodium sulphate. His era had a special name for it, namely *sal mirabile Glauberi*: *Glaubers wonderful salt*. For it was effective against even the hardest case of constipation.

Glauber discovered it when he worked with a chemical/alchemical process, for he didn't make a sharp distinction between chemistry and alchemy. About the Art of Alchemy he has said something very relevant and essential. The following quotation is from a chemical/alchemical work of his published in Paris,1659:

Alchemy is a thought, an image, a discovery, through which the species of metals go from one natural state to another.

In another work, that also was published in French, Glauber says the following about the purely chemical side of alchemy:

The ancients have given this art the name alchemy, that is, saltfusion.

Glauber's explanation of what alchemy is sounds very modern, for in these years physicist from all over the world have been working with fusion of deuterium at room temperature, called, cold fusion.

But the question is: what did Glauber understand by the term "fusion?"

I decided to find out, and came to an astounding conclusion.

J. R. Glauber was a respected chemist and a reasonable man. He knew the gold process, and has described it several times in his books, but he did not produce gold in large amounts. This would only give him problems he states in one of his scripts. Here we still are today, for if gold can be made artificially in a lab, the world economy and gold markets would collapse. This used to be, and still is, a dilemma.

In the 13th and 14th century alchemy in Europe was so widespread that the pope in 1307 issued a ban against gold that was made by alchemists. He demanded that all who made artificial gold should be outlawed. At the same time there where heavy fines for those who traded it.

When something is forbidden one would assume that there is a reason for that. One wouldn't forbid something that doesn't exist.

In 1404 Henry the 4th of England issued a so called "Act" according to which it was a crime against the state and the crown to practice goldmaking.

Later, in 1688, goldmaking was again permitted, for many competent chemists and alchemists had moved abroad, and that was a thorn in the eye of the English king. He therefore issued a so-called "Act of repeal," according to which the whole amount of silver and gold produced should be reported to "Their Majesties Mint" in the Tower of London. Full market price would be paid, and no questions asked.

This is historically interesting, for there is the possibility, that there is still artificially made gold bars in the Bank of England. But we will never know the whole truth.

The word alchemy itself is thought to come from the Egyptian word "chem," which means "black earth." From this we have the term alchemy. But there is also the possibility that the term alchemy could come from the Arabic word "El-kimya," which possibly has root in the even older Sumerian word "ki," which means "earth." or that which today is termed "salts" in chemistry. It is in this sense that Glauber defined alchemy as a "fusion of salts." But he couldn't have known

about the Sumerian culture, for it was first brought to light after the great archaeological excavations around Nineveh in the middle of the 18th century.

Today alchemy has wound up on the same shelf as ghosts and UFOs. Many have seen them, almost everybody has heard about them, but nobody really believes in them. There is something absurd and ambiguous about these things, and without personal knowledge one cannot have an informed opinion.

After eight years of working with alchemy, I feel that the time is ripe to transmit some of the observations and experiences I have reaped. They range from a purely philosophic attitude to alchemy, through fairy tales and religion, to an earthbound and practical work, that has confirmed the old alchemists thoughts and statements from the past up to our own age.

To begin in alchemy demands a naive soul combined with an attitude that goes against the grain of established science which still maintains that gold cannot be made. Yet, if one enters the great work that alchemy is, there is a reward to be found, and it is a great one. For an amazing and wondrous world that one didn't know existed opens up. One can experience it personally.

MAGIC CHEMISTRY OF NATURE

It is a form of creative chemistry one meets in Nature. It is more than just chemical formulas, circuits and exchange of matters.

The alchemists say that Nature has soul, and that it owes its life to "God's spirit that floats over the waters." Spirit is the spark that ignites Nature's enigmatic machinery. It is also the catalyst and the fuel, and we cannot match its results, even though we try through genetic manipulation and DNA research.

For example where do we find the biologist who can create something as simple as a carrot seed? The carrot can, but in reality no one knows how it does so.

The genetic engineers think they have come closer to solving the riddle of life. But a link is missing—and returning to the carrot—it is its latent ability to recreate itself in its own image. This ability, or will, comes into expression when it makes seeds that produce an identical form when it sprouts next spring.

This ability to recreate itself in its own image is the basic idea behind alchemy. Here the purpose is to create the mystical elixir of life, also called the *Philosopher's Stone* that can transmute vulgar metals into gold. For this product is gold that has recreated itself, and it is done by the alchemist's manipulation with the matter.

Alchemy is based on a natural process. The practising alchemists of the past observed Nature and noted certain laws of a rhythmical nature.

They realized that "time" was of decisive importance. Also important are processes of heat and cold that follow each other, not to forget the light that comes from the moon, stars, and sun.

In order to arrive at the mythical and life giving Philosopher's Stone that could be either a liquid or a powder, one should work in unison with natural laws, and not against them. Nature uses various tricks, and they can be imitated through cunning and by going along less travelled roads. Therefore alchemy is also the wizard's and the juggler's domain. Using these paths will lead one to a dawning insight into the occult sides of Nature's chemistry, and it is extremely colorful.

Nature's laws slightly resemble those of chemistry, but chemistry lacks something, especially the time dimension. This was a conclusion that I arrived at after countless failed experiments where I thought that I could imitate the linear methods of conventional chemistry. But it didn't work; something was lacking. Among other things, it just went too fast. The separate links in the chain lacked "time," that is, their own built in time.

The Russian born researcher and philosopher, P. D. Ouspensky, from the beginning of the 20th century, says something about time that is highly relevant in alchemy. In his book, *A New Model of the Universe*, which has been translated from Russian, he says: "There is more 'time' in a liquid than a solid, and more 'time' in gasses than a liquid." He also says the more finely divided a substance is, the more energy it contains and the less space it occupies.

What Ouspensky says about time, energy and space, is something that alchemists have known about for a long time, and also have expressed in their writings, especially the oldest ones. The alchemists' aim was to raise the energy in the matter, while at the same time occupying less and less space. Therefore the single particles in the matter should finally become so fine, and have so high an energy, that they could penetrate into courser bodies and transmute them into gold. Therefore it is self evident that they worked with the atoms of gold. This has never been said loud and clear by any modern alchemist or author of books about the subject.

In Alchemical manuscripts one encounters again and again allusions to a Universal Solvent to be found in Nature. It was something that was in everything and to be found everywhere. It cost nothing, and any child could acquire it.

Without this matter one would get nowhere in alchemy, for it was the basis for the Work.

But what mysterious substance was it, and how should one obtain it?

The following images reveal a part of the riddle.

They are from a collection of pictures without any text, which has the title, "*Mutus Liber,*" that is, "Mute Book," for there were no explanations to what took place in the images.

They are of French origin, and the originals are kept at the National Library in Paris. But it is not known who originated these unusual images that all pertain to the Alchemical Process. The Artist, and perhaps the Alchemist himself, used the pseudonym Altus.

In one image some round bowls are seen on a meadow outside a village. The bowls are the centerpiece of the image; a bull and a lamb are on their way towards them. These bowls seem to contain water, for the moon is reflected on the surface of the content. It's very early morning. The moon hasn't settled yet, but the sun is about to rise behind the dark night clouds.

At closer thought the sun and moon naturally cannot be in the sky beside each other, since the sun rises in the east, and the full moon settles in the west.

But the supernatural glow around the sun probably indicates that the time of the day is in focus, and that the full moon is the central issue.

It has been a night with a full moon, and one still senses the silent fairy tale like atmosphere over the meadow behind the small town with its church spire and medieval buildings.

Some strange rays emanate from the sky over the town. There seem to be two kinds, and they spread like a fan over the ground. It is these rays that are important in relation to alchemy, for they tell us that something comes from heaven itself.

The six flat bowls on the meadow grass form a connection between the rays from heaven and the two animals that seem very interested in the moonlit bowls.

Those who have dogs or cats know how attractive water puddles or birdbaths are to the animals, especially if the sun has shined on the water after a down pouring. Then they drink the water with great relish. Something must have happened to it, and the animals know this. It tastes different than water that has stood in a bowl indoors. But what about the water in the bowls on the meadow? A part of the explanation is to be found in the smaller images below the main motive.

The woman in the picture at the lower left, pours water from one of the bowls on the meadow through a funnel and down into a bottle that is held by a man. In the picture on the lower right side, we see her hand the bottle to a mythological figure that seems to be a combination of Neptune with his trident and Mercury with wings on his head and feet. This figure is a central symbol in alchemy. He is the Lord of Waters and messenger of the Gods in one and the same person.

At the same time he is the symbol of the liquid in the bottle, and the picture shows he has a "hand" in the process. The liquid is a part of the alchemical work.

The symbolic figure is only present as a messenger, for on the following images in the book one sees the man and woman pour the contents of the bottle into a flask that is sealed and put into an oven to be heated.

But what has really happened to the water that was on the meadow in the moonlight? Of this *Mutus Liber*, the silent book, reveals nought.

By coincidence I came into possession of an older Danish book that solved the riddle, but it had nothing to do with alchemy. The book consists of a collection of magazines from 1862 about experiments and observations concerning physics and chemistry (*Tidsskrift for Physik og Kemi*, København 1862)

Among them was a paper about the atmosphere's action on water when left out in the open and what happens to the water in a chemical sense.

A researcher by the name Schønbein had noted that water that was left to evaporate out in the open air formed saltpetersour ammonia from the air's nitrogen, hydrogen and oxygen.

Schønbein had moistened some linen cloths with distilled water and afterwards exposed them to air, so that the water could evaporate slowly. When the cloths had dried, he took them, and soaked them in distilled water. Some substance was now drawn out of the cloths and dissolved in

the water. It showed itself to be saltpetersour ammonia, as he called it, with the chemical formula NH_4NO_2.

The researcher now explains, that what happened was, a so-called “nitrification.” Two nitrogen atoms from the air had joined with four hydrogen atoms in the following way: $2N+4H=N.NH_4$. This again becomes a saltpetersour ammonium salt: NH_4NO_2, in that two oxygen atoms attach themselves to the compound.

In this way, saltpetersour salts are formed in the ground, says Schønbein. The same takes place in plants, from whose surface a continual evaporation takes place. In this way the plants form the nitrates needed for further growth.

At the end of the article about water evaporation Schønbein adds, that it shouldn’t be necessary to add artificial fertilizer to the ground, for Nature is able to handle that issue all by herself. Indeed!

In continuation of these thoughts we can add that we here have a further reason for the preservation of the world's forests, among these, the rain forests, for in these a strong evaporation takes place, and during this the necessary nitrogen compounds are formed.

Schønbein’s experiments with linen cloths that were exposed to the air are a parallel to what happens in the other image from *Mutus Liber*. Here, linen cloths are attached to sticks in the grass to collect the dew from the night sky.

The scenery is the same as on the previous image. The moon is setting, and the sun is about to rise up behind the dark night clouds. There is the same mysterious bundle of rays from heaven, and on the colored image, one sees how there are two different rays, a red and a yellow one.

But the place seems to be a different one. It is not the same meadow, and the village is also another one. In the foreground two people stand who are wringing the liquid from the cloths into a large vessel.

The two images tell us that one can collect dew from the night sky in two fashions, either by putting bowls out on the meadow, or collecting the dew on linen cloths. The old alchemists also knew that something happens with the water in Nature. At the same time they knew that a night with full moon gave the best result and therefore they collected the dew at that time.

I have done the experiment myself several times and discovered that it is so. A salt really forms in the water left outside during a full moon night. One must remember to use distilled water, and it has to be reduced very slowly. In the bowl a fine white salt remains that is water soluble.

The chemist, Schønbein, did not know that the moon's light gives the best result. Such an idea would probably have seemed to be both absurd and ridiculous to him, for he was a traditional chemist. The old alchemists had their own explanation for what happened to water and dew that had been exposed to the rays of the moon. The water becomes active they said, and thereby able to dissolve matters. It should be reduced to a fine salt, and this they called "Water that does not wet the hands." Thereby they meant a dry, water soluble salt.

The alchemical expression "water that does not wet the hands," has been mentioned again and again in modern literature on the subject, but none of the writers have proposed what this matter might be.

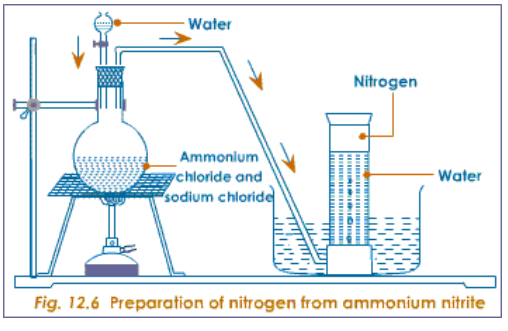


Fig. 12.6 Preparation of nitrogen from ammonium nitrite

So, purely chemically speaking, it is a nitrite, more precisely ammonium nitrite. We use it today for the production of pure nitrogen. This is done by the heating of concentrated ammonium nitrite. Nitrogen contains an enormous amount of energy, more than oxygen and hydrogen. This energy can be utilized by plants in Nature and they do so according to the alchemists—especially during the night and particularly by moonlight.

Did the alchemists know something about the character of moonlight that we don't know about today?

According to old "superstition," or perhaps knowledge, one should get rid of warts during full moon, for then they wouldn't come again. It was also an ancient belief that one shouldn't let one's laundry hang out during the night, for the devil would do tricks with it. Behind this belief was undoubtedly the fact that the clothes would get some *saltpetersour* ammonia, which could weaken the fabric and make it fragile.

In the countryside it was said, that if one wanted to get rid of weeds, it was also best to do so during the full moon. Maybe the knowledge of the alchemists wasn't an acquired one, but a transmitted memory from a remote past where humans might have had a more thorough knowledge of the forces of Nature.

During the medieval age, there existed a method for producing gold, that was quite strange. It consisted in using the moonlit dew from Nature.

The method was simple and efficient and was perhaps used by common folks in those days. And nature did most of the work, for one just had to collect the dew from the meadow, just before sunrise.

The procedure is described in a modern work by Jean Maverick: *L'Art Metallique Des Anciens* (The Metallick Art of the Ancients, Phoenix, Genova)

In this work is collected a number of ancient recipes for the production of gold and silver, and they can produce small amounts of these noble metals as a result.

But the processes are quite difficult, and they require an old fashioned open fire place. I have tried some of them, but not the following. For it utilizes mercury and I do not like that metal.

Neither did other alchemists, for they knew the dangers of this matter. Here follows the recipe for producing gold from dew and mercury.

In May, during full moon, one spreads out linen cloths over the dew wet grass. Early the next morning one wrings the dew out of the cloths into a vessel. Then one needs two pounds of mercury (yes, it really says two pounds, so apparently it was both cheap and easily available in those days. An old French pound is 489 grams)

One then pours a little of the dew water over the mercury and lets it cook over a low heat until the dew has evaporated. Then a new portion of dew is added and further cooked, until it also has evaporated. One continues doing this until one has used all the dew.

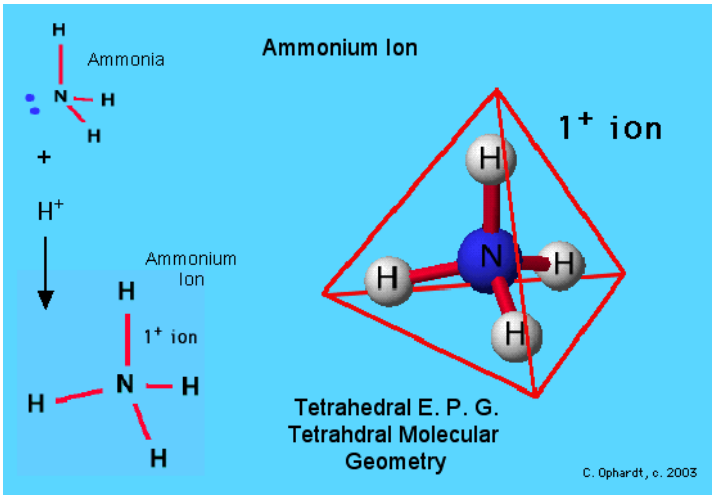
Finally the mercury is poured through a sieve of fine gauze or linen. When the cloth has dried some of the mercury has been transmuted into gold and caught in the fabric.

One can then continue working with the remaining mercury when one has collected a new portion of dew. This can be done for a few days while the full moon is still present.

It's as simple as that states the recipe. This is a true transmutation of mercury into gold, and the method has undoubtedly been used in medieval Europe. But we don't know what happened to those people who worked with mercury in this manner. There was a great risk of them getting brain damage while collecting gold.

That mercury can be turned into gold is perhaps not so unlikely. In the periodic system gold comes just before mercury. The two metals have the atomic numbers 79 and 80, which means they have respectively 79 and 80 protons or positive charges in their nucleus. So mercury only has to give off one proton to become gold, or in other words, loose one positive charge. But how can this be accomplished with something as simple as dew?

If the described method using dew and mercury is true, then the explanation must lie in ammonium salt that has been formed in the dew during the night. The ammonium ion itself is a strange jest of Nature's making, for it does not exist in free form. In reality it doesn't exist. If one tries to isolate it, it will decompose into ammonia and hydrogen.



One of the great alchemists from the past, Le Trevisan, has said that gold was originally formed from mercury that had undergone a long process of natural maturation in the bowels of the earth. Then it worked its way to the surface, for it sought the light. If this is indeed the case, then we might have an explanation for a very strange phenomena that takes place now and then in our day and age.

For it happens that dentists have observed, that one of their clients formed a golden surface on a tooth that originally was equipped with a common old fashioned silver/mercury amalgam filling.

As is commonly known, such a filling contains some mercury, that with the passage of time can be dissolved and disappear. But one might speculate that some of the mercury was heated and "matured" for so long in the oral cavity, that the mercury turned into gold and precipitated on the surface of the tooth.

This is of course a very rare incident, for the process must be dependent on the acid concentration in the mouth, and the matters that otherwise are present.

It is probably also a necessary condition that the pH value in the mouth has to be the same as in the dew water that one collects in Nature during the full moon. The salt that is formed is slightly acidic.

In the mountains one also finds gold in the uppermost mineral layers. From here it can be carried away by bursts of rain and waterfalls. One will usually find gold in the surface layers and the less noble metals in the deeper layers. The alchemists say it is because it seeks the sun. For they are related.

If we again study the two images from *Mutus Liber*, then it is worth noting that the cattle approaching the bowls or the linen cloths, are horned cattle. This is an occult allusion to something both astrological and chemical.

In astrology it is said that everything begins with the sign of Aries, for it is the first spring sign and symbolic of initiative and activity.

Concerning alchemy it is also in a spring sign that the work begins, but that is not to be taken literally, which has also been stated by some alchemists.

The horned cattle in the two images from *Mutus Liber* allude to something that is present in the horns of the animals, and which was important when one was to start the alchemical work. For

here “spring” started due to a matter extracted from animal horns, especially from deer antlers, but also the goat’s and the bull’s horns could be used. The very best would be the horns of unicorns—if one should be able to get hold of such a thing—or so we are told in the old tales.

From the horns of animals one extracted “hartshorn,” “hjortetakssalt,” “deer antler salt,” It was used in alchemy, but also found use in baking. It is still used for baking, for it makes the cakes rise and be crispy.

Chemically speaking, “deer antler salt” is ammonium bicarbonate, so this salt contains the same mysterious ammonium as the dew from the meadow.

But this ammonium disappears during baking; instead ammonia and carbon dioxide are formed.

There is a further occult significance inherent in the two animals, the ram and the bull, for they symbolize two important minerals, from which could be produced the strong acids, sulphuric acid and “sulphursour” acid.

Astrologers are familiar with the fact that the metal iron and the planet Mars are associated with the sign of Aries, while copper and the planet Venus rule the sign of Taurus.

The ram’s mineral is the light green iron sulphate, also called iron vitriol.

The bull's mineral is the blue copper sulphate, or copper-vitriol.

From these two minerals the alchemists produced—as did the chemists—mixtures of strong acids by distilling the minerals with ammonium containing salts, f. x. ammonium chloride or ammonium nitrate. Thereby they obtained solvents for both gold and silver. For these metals where to be brought into liquid form, before one could continue with the process.

The alchemists made all the acids they needed, themselves, for example nitric acid, hydrochloric acid, and “aqua Regis.” The method is described in several ancient manuscripts. It was based on clay, common clay of the type that nowadays is used for making Christmas decorations. I will later describe how these acids were made, and it is quite interesting, for what actually happens is a natural process.

There are a lot of symbols relating to the cattle on the meadow, the bowls with dew and the linen cloths, not to mention the strange rays emanating from the night sky like a fan spread over all living. Perhaps there are even more symbols, but it's hard to tell, for *Mutus Liber* is after all the mute book of alchemy. One first truly discovers the meaning of the shown images when oneself proceeds with working practically with the matters, but it is a long process.

We who live on the threshold of the 21st century can hardly imagine how people thought and reasoned centuries ago. Their logic seems to have been a completely different one than ours, and their chemical symbols, or rather images, seem to us both naïve and unfathomable. If we are to disclose what their symbols meant, then we have to rely on our own knowledge and then think backwards and compare their processes with what we know today.

We can find out what matters they used in those days, for they usually mention how they behaved and how a process would proceed.

But we cannot rely on their terms, for these are almost always misleading. If a modern chemist tries to duplicate the old alchemical recipes and takes the terms for what they are, then nothing will succeed.

The greatest pitfall is in the term "mercury"—*argentum vivum*, as it was called in Latin. In French we still have the words, *argent viv*, and *mercure*, in English, *mercury*.

But mercury is only mercury when spelled with a small "m." If it spelled with a capital "M" it designates the vapour given off from a solvent.

Symbolically this vapour is shown as the messenger of the gods, Mercury or Hermes, and sometimes as a bird or a frog. The latter often appears in old fairy tales as an allegorical animal, it can be an enchanted prince or a messenger that is to deliver an important message. For example that is the case in the tale of Sleeping Beauty where a frog shows itself to the queen to bring her tidings.

There is a good deal of pit falls in the old alchemy books. In French books one often comes upon the terms "sel alcali fixe vegetal" And "sel de tartre." They refer to the same salt, namely potash, or potassium carbonate, as it is also called.

Concerning "sel de tartre" one might think it represents a salt of wine-acid, acidum tartaricum, whose salts are called "tartrates," but that isn't the case.

As a curiosity it can be mentioned that "tartar" in English today means "plaque" or "toothstone," but chemically speaking it is something quite different. The word can also mean a salt of wine acid, so also in our days there is a strange confusion in the terminology. As a final example we can mention the terms: Azoth, Nitre, Salt Peter, Nitrum, and Sal Nitre.

One can almost guess that all the terms have something to do with nitrate and nitrogen compounds. For we still have a reminiscence of the terms in present day chemistry. For example "azo" compounds are nitrogen containing matters, and the term "azote" is sometimes used in English to mean nitrogen.

But during the medieval age nitrogen compounds were many things. There could be different nitrates, for example potassium nitrate, sodium nitrate, or ammonium nitrate, and one didn't always discern between them.

Or it could be about dew from the air, which in French manuscripts sometimes would be called "salpetre," sometimes "nitre." But the terms where quite striking, for the dew contained a saltpetersour salt, namely ammonium nitrite.

This matter has a high content of nitrogen, and one can speculate how they arrived at such a conclusion centuries ago—without knowledge of technical and chemical analytic methods. One cannot avoid thinking whether they knew something about Nature that we don't know today. Perhaps their knowledge was based on a wisdom that we have lost.

A KING'S VISION

Fairy tales relate that dragons are very old and almost invincible. They represent strong universal forces, and therefore it was a task for knights and crusaders to overcome the mighty dragon. Saint George fought against the dragon, and the unstoppable Jason stole the golden bough from the guarding dragon.

There existed a dragon cult and dragon mystery in the past, but what was the dragon, and what is the source of the fairy tale? The secret is revealed in an alchemical text, written by the French king Charles the 6th, who ruled 1380-1422. The king called his scripture *Oeuvre Royale de Charles VI, Roi de France* (the Royal Work of Charles the 6th, King of France). The text has been reprinted by the publisher Jobert, Paris.

Charles the 6th called himself a disciple of philosophy and a scribe for the highest divinity. He says in his script, that he will reveal those secrets, that have been jealously guarded and hidden by the philosophers with weird terms and undecipherable words. These secrets concern the matters, flasks and other utensils, that are used in the workshops of the alchemists.

The king now relates a fairy tale about a dragon, that has its dwelling in a mountain. He relates that he will show what a tale of that kind really means, and how the tale came to be. It begins in this manner:

It was in the month of January. I was travelling in the orient, and there I saw a very large dragon, that was at least five thousand years old. The big strong dragon had his wife with him. She was pregnant and soon to give birth.

The dragon opened a hole in the mountain before me and disappeared into it with his wife. I went after them, and saw, that the cave in the mountain was round and clad with stones all over. It was very deep and extended beneath the dwelling I occupied during my stay. Therefore I wondered how I could protect myself from the dragons poison.

The night fell on. I stood up, and went into the mountain to investigate it closer. Then I saw that the dragon and his wife slept.

I walked around and discovered that there was a small opening at the topmost part. But now the dragon started to move, and it also seemed that his wife was soon to give birth.

I pondered how I could lock them in. I found some appropriate stones, and while I assessed the dragons strength, I began to close up the cave.

When that was done, I returned to my dwelling, and laid down to sleep.

A Sunday morning, some time later, when I opened a window in my chamber, I saw a giant, red snake, and it was much older than the dragon, for it was its father. But the snake was weak for it was very old.

It approached the place where the dragon and his wife was. It could smell the dragons presence, so it snaked around to find an entrance. But the snake couldn't get in, for I had closed all openings. The snake got angry, and spewed out its venom, but it couldn't open the mountain, for it was old, and its poison weakened.

Yet the snake kept spewing its venom over the mountain, and after three months it finally penetrated the closed entrances.

Then the dragon awoke from its deep sleep. It smelled its fathers toxic breath and arose.

The dragons wife got scared of the poison, and gave birth from sheer panic. The snakes venom drew closer, and they all tried to get out. They spread out their dragon wings and flew repeatedly up against the ceiling, but it was closed with the stones I had set there.

I saw how their attempts at escape turned into fumes of a lemon yellow colour. Then they attained a sheen of gold and soon after they resembled ruby red gems. Then the fumes turned green, blue and violet, and sometimes completely black.

I went up on the mountain, opened the hole in the top and looked down. The dragon, his wife and son, had all turned into a splendid white mass, and I was very happy and satisfied. I took a small amount of the white matter, threw it on some quicksilver, and this became the most resplendent silver.

The snake was still full of poison. It was bloated, furious, and much stronger than before. Then I went home to my dwelling, to await what would further happen.

A Saturday morning at Easter time I opened my window, and saw that the snake was dead. It had turned into grey ashes.

I hurried over to the cave, opened all entrances, and saw that the white mass of the dragon and his family had turned into a deeply red matter. I took a thousandth of it, threw it upon quicksilver, and I got splendid gold.

I then thanked Jesus Christ, who had allowed me to partake in the secrets of nature. There upon I travelled home to France to serve the Lord.

After this fairy tale the king explains, that the whole tale describes a process in alchemy, namely the one that leads to the Philosopher's Stone, the powder that can transmute quicksilver and other vulgar metals into gold.

In the beginning of the story there is a mountain, where the dragon enters with his wife. This "mountain" is the oven or fireplace where the process takes place. It is often called "athanor".

Inside the oven there is a glass vessel, and that is the dragons cave. The dragon itself is the metal gold—le Soleil, the Sun, it is told in the text. Only by killing the gold in its original form can one arrive at the Philosophers Stone.

The dragons wife is called la Lune, the Moon, and she is the matter, that dissolves the gold. The son to whom she gives birth, is the new gold, that is even more splendid than the old.

Multiplicatio. Fermentatio
Ferner ins ☿ auch gewis
Das rechte Corrosiu nur is,
Das ins geschir rumbschlagen thut,
als ein ☿ige wolken gluth

The red snake, that slithers around the cave and seeks to enter, is the fire. In alchemy the fire may not touch the gold directly, but only heat up the surroundings, until the gold solution begins to give of fumes. These fumes become stronger, the more the snake, or the fire, slithers around and gains power.

The time that must pass is long, the tale starts in January and ends at Easter time, which is three months later. The French king informs us about several things in his tale. Firstly about the matter, which is gold, the old dragon. It is dissolved by another matter—the dragons wife, and together they give birth to a son, which is a deeply red matter.

The king also relates, that the fumes, which are symbolized by flying dragons, may not come out into open air. They must be kept sealed up, until they fall down as a white powder, that gradually turns red.

The red dragon is fire, says the king. It is the dragons father, so they are relatives. Sun and fire are both a symbol for gold, but fire is the oldest, because it is one of the four elements, namely fire, air, earth and water.

One is also informed about the "mountain," which is the oven and its furbishing. It is clad with stones inside, so it can maintain an even heat. All entrances should be closed, and only at the end of the process is one allowed to open up and have a peek.

So Charles the 6th was an alchemist, and he was not the only one among the aristocracy, who was seriously engaged in alchemy. And this science is indeed often called "the royal art," and perhaps we can here find a hitherto overseen or ignored explanation of the enormous wealth of certain noble families in olden days.

Charles the 6th undoubtedly frequented his times most talented alchemist, the Parisian Nicolas Flamel. This man started out as a public scribe in a small side street in inner Paris, but in 1382 reached the pinnacles of wealth in cooperation with his wife, Pernelle Flamel. These two later gave money and property in and around Paris to its less fortunate citizens.

In relation to their life work, alchemy, one cannot avoid thinking of another Parisian couple, namely Marie and Pierre Curie from the beginning of this century. Both these research couples were involved in investigating subatomic processes, but Nicolas and Pernelle called the proceedings transmutation of matter. The Curies called the phenomena radioactivity. In both cases work with the atomic nucleus was the subject.

Slightly later, during the reign of the following French king, Charles the 7th , who ruled from 1422-1461, the extremely rich Jewish merchant Jacques Coeur made his presence felt on the money market. He was the kings silvermaster and carried the title "Grand Argentier de Charles VII." Jacques Coeur was also an alchemist, and the saying went, that he could produce more silver than he could consume.

Jacques Coeur erected noble manors, one after the other, and lent money to noble families all over Europe. It is said that these loans were mediated by that times remarkable female beauty, Agnes Sorell. She was Jacques Coeurs confidant and link to the king of France and other European noble houses.

Around this time the waves of France's alchemical workshops reached the shores of Denmark. This could have caused the Danish king, Erik of Pommern—while Jacques Coeur's reputation and merits were on the rise—to establish a law, that imposed strict control with precious metals on all gold and silver traders in the country. The same law was imposed on the gold and silver smith fraternities, and it was actually in effect up to 1932, where control was passed on to a state establishment.

This could indicate, that in the 14th century there might have been so much "artificial" precious metal in circulation in Europe, that the Danish king became suspicious. This is an issue, that no traditional historian seems to have considered seriously, because the accepted opinion is that no one can make gold or silver. They are elements, and therefore cannot be made. Yet much points to the possibility, that at least some of the old physicians, chemists and many noblemen with time to spare mastered such a process. They even wrote very lengthy works about the procedure and thereby passed so much of their knowledge on, that others could get started. If these others

could read that is, and if they knew the chemical language and symbols of that time. Because they were reserved to a few initiates.

Just about all contemporary researchers and writers say about alchemy, that its chemical nomenclature is totally undecipherable today.

Some writers even go as far, as saying that alchemy is only to be understood in an abstract and allegorical way. This is for example the view of C. G. Jung, the Dr. and psychiatrist from this century.

An interpretation of that kind is not the whole truth, but likely a side of it. The chemical part of alchemy demands working with the matter, and a certain feel for the symbols in order to translate the old terms into a contemporary language. So one has to personally work with the materials.

At the same time it happens that one, little by little, realizes what it was, the matters that the alchemists worked with. Because they often gave hints to a metals or a minerals character. Or they described how a certain matter reacted with other matters. All small bits and pieces that could help solve the jigsaw puzzle.

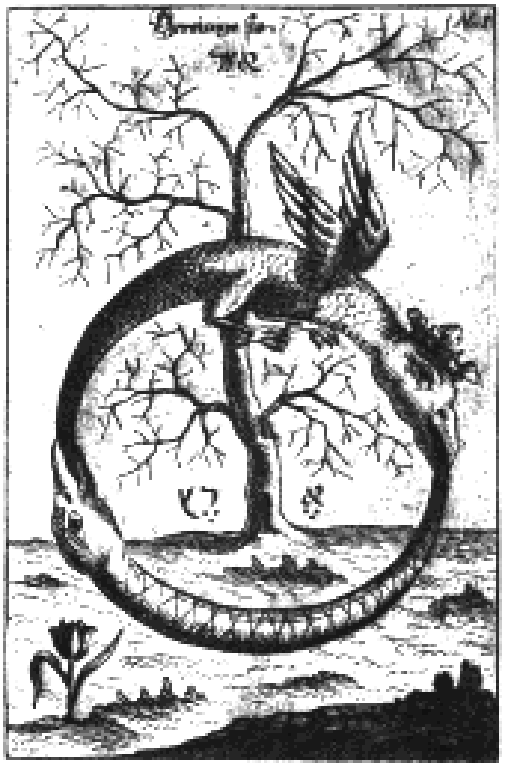
A good example of an alchemical riddle, that is a hard nut to crack, is the legendary unicorn. In English it's called “unicorn” in French it's called “licorne”.

The unicorn was a horse-like, friendly and beautiful animal, that had a long horn on its forehead. At the same time it had a bushy lion tail.

These two things, the long pointed horn, and the lion-like tail, contain its secret in unison. Firstly, that it possessed a penetrating power, symbolized by its horn. Secondly, that it has a connection to Leo in the “other end,” as shown by its tail. The lion tail is a connection to the metal gold.

The Unicorn is mentioned in Greek literature already by 400 B.C., and it is told about it that its horn contains a matter that neutralized all poisons.

Here we have the key to the riddle of the unicorn. At the same time there is a parallel to the horned cattle from *Mutus Liber*, the silent book of alchemy. In both cases the matter is something that could be extracted from the animals horns. This matter is what we nowadays know as “hartshorn” or ammonium carbonate.

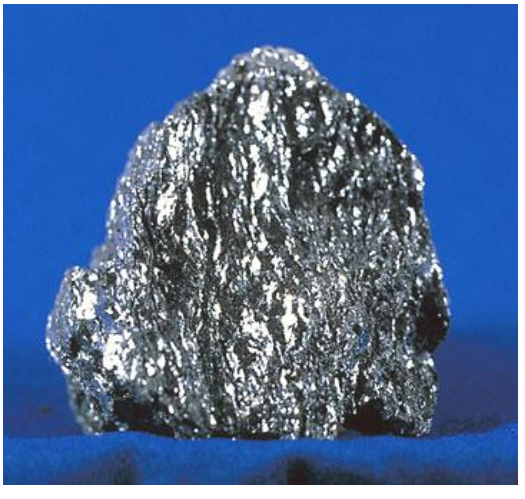


With this salt one can neutralize aqua regia, the strong "poison" that was used to dissolve gold. When the poison is neutralized the gold is precipitated as a very fine and pure 24 karat gold powder.

The same effect can be had with potash, also known as potassium carbonate. Potash has its own fairy tale, Cinderella, and it is one of the finest alchemical fairy tales known.

The flying dragons of alchemy is a gold solution, that like the dragons in fairy tales spews poisonous fumes. The upper dragon has a crown on its head, because it is symbolic for gold, king of metals. Finally it loses its wings, falls to the ground and eats itself, whereby it is turned into a deep red powder.

THE RED SPRING



Alchemists call iron the first, primitive matter among metals. It belongs under the first active spring sign, Aries, and is dedicated to the war god Mars. Astrologers say the same, but where does such a view of iron come from? Were alchemy and astrology part of a very ancient science? Something could indicate this, for both astrology and alchemy are forms of philosophy and gnosis that extend the farthest back in time. Already the old Egyptians were involved with these subjects, as were the Babylonians, Arabs, and Jews, long before our own era and religion.

Since the dawn of time there has been iron on this planet. It came from space as a victorious warrior, a demon and a curse, that through a bombardment of meteors, asteroids and loadstones, took this planet into possession.

At the same time water came to earth, for it was encapsulated in the iron lumps in the form of crystal water. BTW one can extract this ancient water from in the form of a pure clear liquid, when one heats the stones to 800 degrees Celsius. Therefore there must be, or have been, water present somewhere out there, and that is most interesting.

The iron lumps that from heaven fell, dissolved over time, coloured the soil red and ran in blood red streams out into the oceans that slowly were formed.

We are still living under the iron rule. It is everywhere, and has left its red tracks in sand, clay, minerals and even in semiprecious stones like tourmaline and hematite. Iron is also an important part of ourselves, we have it in our blood, and the same goes for our fellow creatures, the animals on land and the fish in the sea.

Iron is also the metal of war. It is the metal of violence and destruction, and we are bound to it as a Prometheus to the cliff. With iron bound to the haemoglobin in our blood our destiny is a tight bonding to the metal of Mars, the god of war. Unless we can free ourselves! It is on such a philosophy that alchemy is based.

The goal of alchemy is to transform everything vulgar and evil into clean pure gold. Both literally and allegorically, and it is possible we are told.

Iron came from space, and the gods from heaven, the legends relate. But where did man come from, and are the legends of creation true?

The word Adam or Adamus means “created of red earth,” that is, clay with a high content of iron oxides. The red color dominated on this planet, long before green and blue arrived.

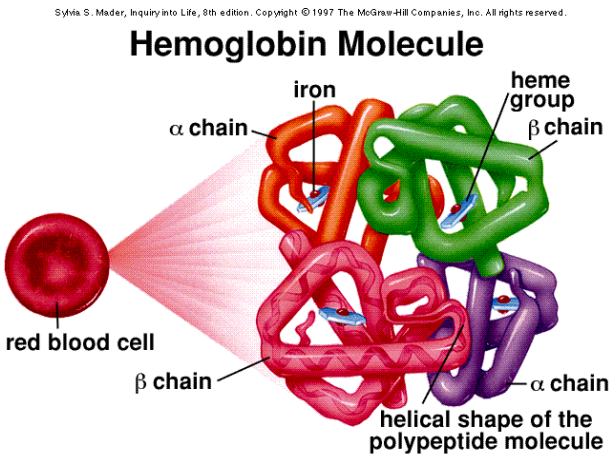
A rainbow has the red colour as the first. Then comes the yellow, green, blue, and, finally, violet. This colour is also the true ethereal colour of gold, and one encounters it in practice, when one has precipitated absolutely pure gold. This will appear violet when highly diluted. It is interesting, that iron can also become so pure, that it appears with a violet colour.

The violet band of the rainbow is the symbol for the development that everything, metals, animals, humans, has to go through.

The Sumerian myths are about 6.000 years old and tell about “the Flood”, that flooded everything, and which is likely a historic fact. These myths also relate that the first humans the gods created were defect and unusable as field slaves. The myth reveals an interesting detail, for we are told, that the gods were drunk when they created the first humans (*Middle Eastern Mythology*, S. H. Hooke)

And what was it for, “slaves” that the gods made from iron laden clay (a form of raw iron ore)? From these matters iron could be extracted for both weapons and tools, but the process was very difficult and required a knowledge that common people didn’t have before much later in history.

Another legend of creation arose on the Mediterranean island, Cyprus, which already had an evolved culture by 3000 B. C.


Sylvia S. Mader, Inquiry into Life, 8th edition. Copyright © 1997 The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. All rights reserved.
Hemoglobin Molecule
iron
heme group
α chain
β chain
red blood cell
β chain
α chain
helical shape of the polypeptide molecule

It was the legend of Pygmalion, that had made a statue of a woman, that he fell in love with. But she did not come alive before Aphrodite found mercy for him. She had the knowledge he lacked, but what was it?

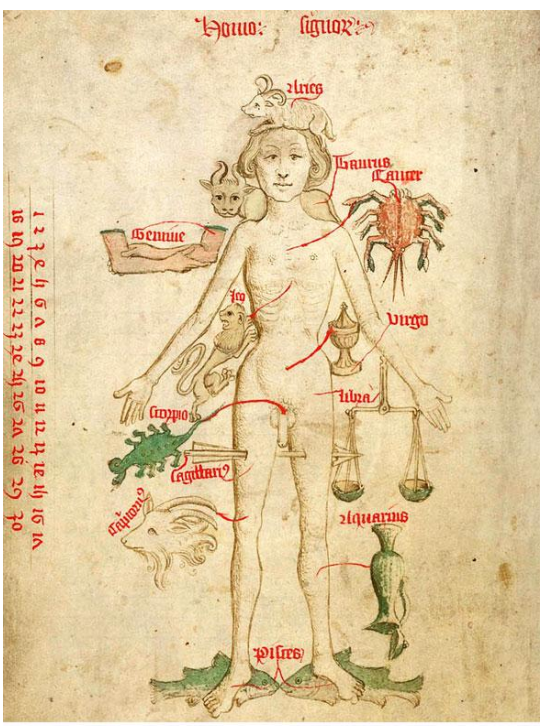
In other old legends it is told, that the gods had come from space as victorious pioneers. The same was the case with iron, that at the dawn of time poured down over this planet, so that animals and men could get red blood in their veins. Iron became a necessary factor for the life processes here on earth. Without iron in our blood we would perish, and we would not have been around in our present form.

Perhaps there lies a sophisticated thought behind the legends, just as with the fairy tales. Here the acting figures are often allegoric beings such as animals in disguise, things that can talk, or concepts that are personified. The forces that brought life to this planet millennia ago, came from iron. It not only brought along iron from space, but researchers today have also proposed the theory that at the same time micro organisms arose that produced oxygen in the iron laden mass.

The first human in the biblical creation myth (Genesis) was called Adam. His tale is a reconstruction of the much older Sumerian myths, that had been adapted to the Jews wish for one, and only one, almighty, personal god.

According to his name Adam was “created of red earth,” that is, iron oxides, and from this man learned to produce weapons.

Adam therefore represents the outgoing force and belongs under the war god Mars, that became synonymous with iron. But the god mars is limp and is often portrayed as a warrior with a wooden leg. As such we meet him in alchemical imagery. But even if he has the primitive iron in his blood, this iron can be turned into gold, the alchemists say. Therefore the



Zodiac Man, labelled 'Homo signorum'.
Guild Book of the Barber Surgeons, c1486.
BL MS Egerton 2572 f. 50v.

war god Mars is often depicted with a golden halo around his head. For he can end up being a king among metals just like gold. But it requires that he yields and becomes humble.

In alchemy we therefore meet the demand for spiritual transformation, purification, and sublimation. Iron must give up its leading role as conquering warrior and become a humble servant. And Jesus said something similar somewhere.

Iron came from space and was perhaps the first "gods" or "fallen angels"—for they fell to earth in the most literal sense. We are blood related to them, for we have these gods iron in our blood. BTW wasn't it Jesus that once said to his disciples "You are gods," but they understood it nought.

In the biblical version of the adamic riddle is written, that he got a consort, Eve. She was made from the ribs of Adam we are told. This has put grey hairs on the heads of many theologians. One might rightly ask, if there isn't something wrong here? Perhaps a faulty translation or a misinterpretation. Or maybe something completely different?

Adam belongs in the sign of Aries, and after that follows the sign of Taurus, the old earth sign.

Here is the home of the feminine bright red metal, and Venus became symbolic of it in alchemy.

In the biblical tale we are told that it was good for Adam to have a consort. So he got his Eve, and that settled the matter in the bible.

But what do the alchemists say?

If we translate the biblical tale to an alchemical language, we get a variation of it, which is that Eve, or copper, is created from Adam, who is iron.

Here we have established an analogy between the religious myth and the alchemical view of chemistry. We can examine this closer by performing a little experiment.

We need some iron filings, some copper chloride, a little wine-acid (wine vinegar), and a heat resistant bowl.

The copper salt is blue, and in solution it has the same colour as the mediterranean ocean in sunshine. Food for thought. Because from this area stems the myth of Venus (Aphrodite), the woman that was born in a seashell on the blue ocean.

Already in the year 3000 B.C. copper was produced on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, which means "copper island." Here they also had, as previously mentioned, the legend of

Pygmalion, that had his statue animated with the help of Aphrodite. But who was she actually, for she was also called Venus, and was synonymous with copper in alchemy!

The iron filings that we are going to use, are the masculine metal. They are the ribs of Adam and have the same elongated form, when they are whittled of the iron. Iron filings will, just like all other matters that are whittled, have a slightly curved form, that resemble a rib. Iron in itself has in pure form a whitish sheen, and its color resembles that of human skin or bones.

The blue copper chloride must now be dissolved in boiling water in the bowl. We then get the blue "ocean," from which Venus is to be born later. She is latently present in the copper salt.

We then add wine-acid and iron filings, Adams ribs. Now the "ocean" begins to foam and bubble, and shortly after Eve is born, or Venus, in the form of brightly red copper, that rises up to the surface.

The danger with such an interpretation was of course that believers and religious authorities could accuse the alchemist for blasphemy and god mockery, because no one should dare to draw parallels between the work of God and chemistry. The catholic church, just like so many other authorities, was stiff, unforgiving, and totally lacking in humour.

This resulted in theological nit picking from the side of the mother church in Rome, and often the alchemist had to either give up his own ideas and conclusions, or at least go into seclusion, almost like an outlaw.

In relation to the experiment with iron flings and copper salt, we need no fairy tales in our day and age. Metallic copper is precipitated, because some iron has gone into solution as an iron salt.

"Adam" got his "Eve," but he had to pay for it. Perhaps there is hidden an experiment behind many legends, myths, and fairy tales, that most didn't understand, or was not to be revealed to the uninitiated. This could be the case with Genesis, the most enigmatic legend of all.

One of the great alchemists of the past, Arnauld de Villeneuve, who was born around 1235 in France, presented some ideas that astonishingly resemble those of modern nuclear physicists.

Arnauld de Villeneuve issued a small scripture in 1303 about the origins of metals. *La chemin du chemin*, The Road to the Road, he titled it.

Therein he says: “There is only a single first matter of the metals,” and he adds that everything depends on the influences from nature, whereby the matter can take on different forms. Further on in the text he says, that all metals stem from one original, first matter, which he calls “Mercure,” Mercury. All known metals can be reduced to this first matter, and therefore is transmutation possible, he claims.

Alchemy's first and original matter, from which all known metals are formed, is equivalent to what we today call a proton, that is, the nucleus of a hydrogen atom. From this our whole present periodic system of elements is built up. But there had to pass 600 years before Niels Bohr presented the periodic system of atomic numbers, starting with hydrogen, that has a single positive nucleus.

So it is not excluded that transmutation is possible, because a nuclear transformation can take place by bombardment with neutrons, that don’t have an electric charge, but high energy. But the alchemists didn’t have access to a modern nuclear physics lab. And they didn’t need it, because they used natures own powerful tool, Time, and the matters naturally present, that is, the atmospheres content of elements, nitrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen.

An alchemist from the same period as Arnauld de Villeneuve, the Frenchman, Morien, has said the following: Our science can be compared with the creation of man. The Seed, which we call Mercury, unites with the earth, who is mother of all elements.

In Morien’s writings we again meet this “earth”, from which man should have been created, and the mysterious term “Mercury,” that is equivalent to the term “gods breath” in religion.

According to the alchemists, this breath penetrates everything in earth, water and air. It is an omnipresent natural force, and it is found under many names and countless forms, as fairies, trolls, nymphs and sylphs. C. G. Jung calls it Merlin, the natural force and spirit of the great forests.

Even if iron is the metal of war, it can be transmuted and become both silver and gold, the alchemists claim. During the reign of Charles the 7^{th} (1422-1461), lived the previously mentioned rich merchant and alchemist Jacques Coeur.

He erected expensive buildings in and around Bourges in the center of France. He also had the title of royal silvermaster, and it is told, that he also made some of the silver for the kings needs.

Jacques Coeur used iron as starting material, and in the first place he converted it into a more aethereal form, then extracted the essence of iron. This essence was called “le fer essesifie.” It could then become silver.

The contemporary alchemist Fulcanelli in his books about the alchemical symbols and buildings (*Les Demeures Philosophales*), tells us that the colour of this iron is violet. It is the same colour that absolutely purified gold has.

BTW Jacques Coeur is mentioned in the book *Voices from the past* by Jeffrey Iverson. This is very apropos, when we are talking alchemy, because in alchemy rebirth or reincarnation is the red thread in the process. Each time a matter is reborn, that is, dissolved and precipitated after the motto “solve et coagula,” it gains a slightly better form. Each rebirth brings it a step closer to the Philosophers Stone.

Iron came to earth from space, and the same did the gods, the legends tell. Even the earth's core is iron, because if this core is struck by a tidal wave, it rings like a fine metallic church bell.

Iron has the atomic number 26. That means that iron contains 26 positive charges, plus just as many negatively charged negative electrons.

If iron is to become silver, that has the atomic number 47, protons have to be supplied. Iron lacks 47 minus 26 protons, that is, 21 positive charges in order to become silver, and these must be had from somewhere.

It is very likely that these could come from nitrogen, which has the atomic number 7. Because it is nitrogen and its compounds that are alluded to again and again in alchemy, nitrous compounds are the building blocks of nature. They must be present in the form of vapors, and it is these that in alchemy are a part of the concept Mercury.

Vapors give off energy to the metal, and at the same time there is an increase in weight, which in itself is quite remarkable. But it happens slowly, and only at a certain temperature. At the beginning of the process the temperature must be that, which in alchemy is called “nesting heat.” That is the temperature that a hen maintains while hatching her eggs. On images of alchemical workshops one therefore often sees one or more hens hatching eggs.

Iron is not just the primitive, simple metal, that is ruled by the war-god Mars. It is also the metal of pioneers and inventors. There are endless possibilities in iron and its compounds. Iron is itself a creative material, perhaps because it is magnetic. That could be the reason why we have it in our blood—if one harbors the belief that there is a deeper meaning to it all.

Iron has shown its amazing qualities in the world of electronics, it is the basis for all communication technology and bring people closer to each other. Here it is not the weapons speaking.

In the so called memory circuits in computers iron oxides are used, to which there can be added other matters like barium, cobalt or nickel oxides.

Iron is in reality the element that has the greatest latent possibilities. That is why in alchemy iron is the “half-god” that is brother to the royal gold.

Iron and the old Adam are still present in man, but iron can be brought to show other sides of his being than those where present in the beginning—and still are—in the form of raw and aggressive forces.

Iron and copper solutions.

THE BLUE MOON METAL

Alchemy can appear like pure hokus-pokus, magic, even after many years of working repeatedly with an experiment. If one begins to work with silver, Luna, one will experience that mysterious forces are at play.

The metal and element silver can be described in two ways. The one can be seen by looking into a textbook on chemistry, but that is not of much assistance, if one is to understand alchemy. The other description of alchemy is found in the writings of the alchemists of the past. For them silver is more than just a metallic element.

Silver in alchemy represents the moon, the ancient feminine principle, that is behind everything manifest in nature. It happened at the dawn of time in the great waters.

The alchemists of the past knew nothing about modern evolutional theories, and they could do without, because they knew, that everything had its origin in a chaos of primary waters, that strangely enough took form in the formless water.

The moon, or Luna, rules over the waters, and is synonymous with liquids in alchemy. Everything came to be in a watery element the alchemists say, and therefore all matter must be re-dissolved in a liquid, if it is to be brought into another form.

There is something prehistoric, dead and spooky about the moons blue white light. This sensation is real enough, for in reality the moon doesn't shine. It only reflects the light of the sun, and it is a completely different light that is reflected back to earth, for it is polarized. Moonlight vibrates in a different plane than sunlight, and it also has a completely different effect in nature.

Moonlight has a dissolving effect on everything, that is to be broken down and become earth. Therefore, in alchemy, the moon represents the liquid that dissolves metals. Without this

dissolution no growth takes place and no procreation (bearing fruit or offspring, increase, augmentation, multiplication).

The metal silver belongs to the sign of Cancer, as in astrology the moon has rulership of this sign. .

So it would be quite natural to assume, that silver formed in the oceans and thereafter settled as a solid matter inside the mountains when they arose from the ocean bed.

If one observes a piece of silver ore, the metallic silver is almost always nested between a layer of a sand or claylike material that is very compact as if it had been under pressure. The silver looks as if it originally had settled down on the sea bottom in layers of mud and silt, and it must have happened in the ocean over a very long period of time. Maybe the silver is formed by micro organisms, parallel to those that suddenly began to produce oxygen billions of years ago.

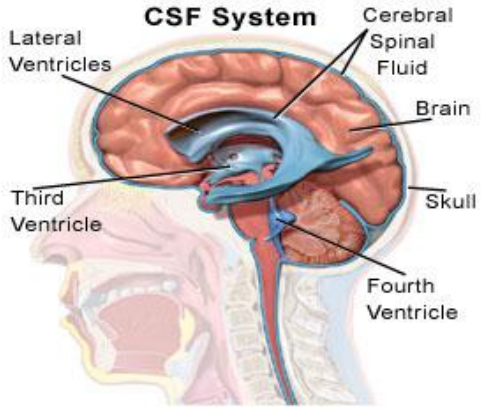
Silver plays some kind of, as yet not fully disclosed, part in the organism of all living beings. We need just a tiny wee bit of it, but it is rarely mentioned in literature about trace minerals. But those familiar with homeopathy are aware of the value of silver salts, especially silver nitrate.

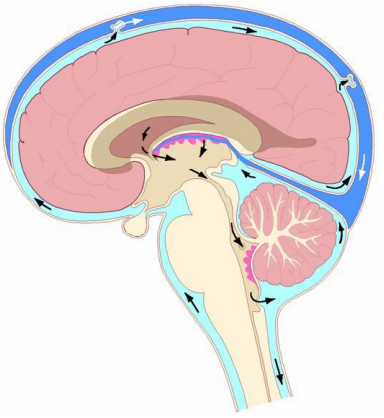
It is used in an extremely fine dilution, and every chemical trace of silver is gone. But we need the radiations from silver if our nervous systems are to remain intact, and if we wish to avoid getting ("moonsick"—l*unatic*, as it is called in English after the Latin word for moon, *luna*) moonmadness, *Lunatic*.

The moon affects the oceans. It influences the tides and the sea dwelling creatures that spout their eggs in cyclic periods. The moon regulates the oceans respiration, and we humans still have this respiration in us. The so called "spinal-marrow-respiration" must be a remnant of our connection with the ocean in a prehistoric age where we didn't have lungs. This primary respiration, as it is also called, is a rhythmical pulsation in the brain-backbone-spinal marrow fluids (Cerebral Spinal Fluid, CSF) closed tubular system, and has a period of about 8-12 BPM (beats per minute), that is very slow.

We are still tied to the primal ocean and the moon, mostly during sleep or meditation. In these instances it is very likely that heartbeat and respiration resonate or synchronize with the CSF respiration, so that our nervous systems are recharged to handle the challenges of the following

day. Indeed nobody really knows why we have to sleep, but we know we are recharged or refreshed.





The great oceans contain tons of silver in an extraordinarily high dilution, about 10 milligrams in a ton of seawater. The silver is so finely divided, that it is not economically feasible to extract it. But a lot of small animals, that build snail houses, conches and shells, do so. The most beautiful of them have blue, rosy red, and violet mother of pearl layers, that coat the rough calcium carbonate shell in fine layers.

The many colors stem from the silver in the ocean water, and likely also from gold, of which there is almost just as much present. Because both these metals will appear with the same violet and rosy red colors in certain compounds.

So it is not ordinary metal anymore, but fine microscopic matters, that these beings have secreted onto the calcium shell with stoic calm over many years.

There is almost no calcium in seawater, and one can then wonder about, how these creatures have managed to get the raw material for their housings. It is quite probable, that the calcium has been procured through a transmutation of other matters, for example potassium, because according to contemporary researchers and alchemists, nature is an expert at doing just that.

The Greek philosopher Plato, who lived 427-347 BCE, was familiar with alchemy through his teacher Socrates. Plato had knowledge of many alchemical processes and has said, that there is gold in ordinary sea salt, but it remains spiritual until it is precipitated in visible form. This bit of information is found in a work from the hand of J. R. Glauber, that was published in Paris, 1659 (*Des Navigants* pp. 22-23).

Plato's and Glauber's statements are interesting, because we today know that gold and silver form compounds with the element chlorine of which there is a lot in ocean water, about 19%.

Gold also forms compounds with sodium chloride, of which there is a lot in the ocean, and forms an orange yellow compound, sodium gold chloride. All the salts of gold have beautiful red, orange, blue and violet colours, and the same goes for silver salts under certain conditions. We will investigate this closer in a moment through a little experiment.

The animals that live in snail houses and conches, suck in seawater and digest the matters they come in contact with. They thereby absorb the metal salts from the ocean together with the

organisms on which they subsist. Little by little, they exude the fine organic silver and gold complexes, for they cannot utilize them. These violet and rosy (pink) coloured matters are totally destroyed, if one treats them as metallic compounds that can be dissolved in acids.

We can prove that the colours stem from the ocean's silver reserves, because we can copy the process, and make those colors appear that these beings fabricate from sea salt, calcium and silver, plus some nitrate, which they get from the organic matters they absorb.

Before we proceed with the experiment, we will mention, that the conches and shells of the ocean were used in the medieval age, as a symbol of natures riches.

The previously mentioned alchemist and grand merchant, Jacques Coeur, decorated his manors with ornaments, in which the shell always was used as a motif on the outer surfaces of the houses. He was born in 1396 and accumulated great silver treasures through his life, and the saying goes, that he used iron as the raw material for this. But one might also suspect that he got the silver from the shells of the ocean, and that he had found a working process. He went the same way as so many other alchemists. He was expatriated and died on the coast of Asia minor, 60 years old.

Lets proceed with the experiment with silver, the moons own metal, Luna. Most silverware contains copper, that has been added to make the silverware more durable. Pure silver is very soft, but it is the pure silver and its salts, that are used in alchemy.

In laboratories and goldsmithies (goldsmith workshops) silver items are dissolved with nitric acid. It is done under a so called fume hood, because some very bothersome and toxic nitrous oxide fumes are given of, especially if the temperature is over 16-17 degrees Celsius.

The process can become so violent that the contents fly in the air, and one must then quickly dilute with water. But the problem can be avoided.

Silver is a “cold” metal, and belongs to the night and the moons cold light. If one wants to avoid the violent reaction between silver and nitric acid, one must extend the (reaction) time by lowering the temperature. These two things relate to each other, because at low temperature all natural processes are slowed down.

Silver was probably formed in the great oceans and then brought up on dry land, when the ocean beds rose and began to form mountains.

Inside of these the silver was then precipitated in a very slow pace, at about 4 degrees Celsius (see note 1) This corresponds to the principle that Saturn represents in astrology. Saturn contracts, solidifies and hardens, and this takes place in the cold and through long periods of time. Saturn's influence is complementary to the moons, because it rules the sign of Capricorn, which is in opposition to the sign of Cancer, house of the moon, and where silver belongs (has its home).

The best time to dissolve silver is in the late autumn months or the early spring months, and this is also mentioned in literature about alchemy.

One now puts the silverware, perhaps folded together or broken into pieces, in a glass, it could be an empty jam jar, and places it into a box of sand under a lean-to or in a shed.

Then one pours nitric acid over it so the silverware is just covered.

At low temperature there is hardly any nitrous oxides given off, but something is happening in the silver just the same. It takes on a yellowish colour, and sometimes one can smell very faint acid fumes.

The process takes time, so one lets the glass sit quite undisturbed for a week or two. At the same time one must assure that solution sits (stands) in a place where it cannot accidentally be toppled over by cats, porcupines, or other animals.

Over time the silver is dissolved, and if there is copper in it the liquid turns blue. One then dilutes with a little water and can take the glass back indoors.

One now has a solution consisting of silver nitrate plus a blue copper salt. The silver nitrate can now be precipitated as white silver chloride, and this is easily done with common table salt, sodium chloride. So much salt is needed as to ensure that all silver is precipitated, that is, salt in excess, and it must be dissolved in water.

As the whole now will take up more volume, it is advisable to pour the silver nitrate with its copper content into a large glass bowl, before one proceeds to add concentrated salt water.

As soon as the salt water comes in contact with the silver nitrate solution, the liquid turns milky white. It is silver chloride that now precipitates, and it resembles lumpy sour milk. Curiously enough silver chloride is compared to sour milk or raw cheese in all the conventional text books on chemistry. Did these authors ever give it a thought, that silver is a moon metal, and that the moon happens to have an influence on the lactation and breastfeeding of animals in nature?

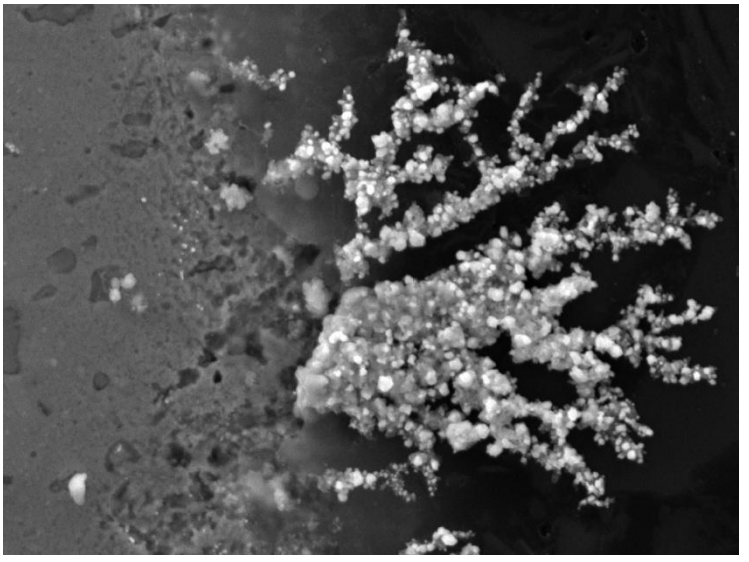
One sets the bowl with silver chloride aside and lets it sit for about an hour. Then one can carefully decant the blue copper laden liquid off, that stands above the precipitate. The blue liquid can be stored in a separate glass and then precipitated as copper later on. This can be done with iron filings, the masculine metal in alchemy. The iron slowly dissolves and a brown powder of metallic copper is precipitated.

When it is washed, dried, and ground to a fine powder, one has an excellent paint (base, pigment, color). If one adds “purified” gasoline or a binder to this copper powder, it can be used on wood,

stucco, cast iron and cement. The paint covers completely and dries fast, and the painted objects take on a beautiful golden bronze colour.

The white precipitate is now rinsed once with water, and then the bowl of silver chloride is set aside with abundant water.

Something very strange will now take place. The white silver chloride will, in the course of some hours form coral like formations of snowy white branches, moving from the bottom upwards. The long fine branches sometimes resemble thin icicles with flowers, and they gradually take on a violet sheen. Sometimes they hang down from the surface of the liquid as thin needles with “ice feathers” (think of an icy windshield) on them. Here we have an example of silver's cold moonlike character. Flowers are formed, that resemble the winter night's magic with the growths of nature.



The process continues for some hours, and when no more crystals are formed, they all slowly sink down to the bottom of the bowl.

Chemically seen, the crystals form at a certain acidity level in the liquid after the original nitric acid had been diluted with salt water and then washed once with water.

I measured the pH value, that is, the acidity, in the water wherein the crystals grew. It was between 0.5 and 1.0, still a strong acid, but diluted with water.

The beautiful white coral branches of silver chloride can only be formed if they get time and calm (if they can take their time), and one will not get to see them in a modern laboratory, where time is a factor one doesn’t like. When the silver chloride crystals have settled to the bottom of the bowl, one rinses several times with water and sets the precipitate aside in a moist state.

The silver chloride, that was white to begin with, now becomes more and more violet. The color is as that of a flower, and if the silver chloride is left in the bowl in a moist state and covered so it will not be exposed to direct sunlight, the color will last almost indefinitely.

It is this blue violet color that alchemists call the “soul” of silver. It has however the moons shifting nature and is so impressionable that it can become both rosy coloured and completely red. J. R. Glauber has said the following about silver in a scripture from 1659:

There can be no doubt, that the interior of the moon (silver) contains more color (tincture) than the sun (gold), because the moon is completely red inside, while the sun is blue, this one should note. (*De L'oeuvre Minerale*, p. 60)

So the blue white silver chloride can become rosy, pink and red, and something similar happens in the oceans conches and shells. How they accomplish this nobody seems to know, but we can imitate them to a certain degree by using the matters they have at their disposal. And that is common salt, chalk, silver and a little bit of nitrate.

One begins with a bag of pure white sea salt. A portion of it is poured into an enamelled pot or a heat resistant glass bowl. The salt is then dissolved in lots of boiling water and reduced until a dry salt remains. This is ground and pulverized, where after it is again dissolved in boiling water. The process is repeated several times, and one finally has a fine, light powder, that at the same time has lost the sharp salt taste.—By the way, this product will make a fine base for a gourmet salt!

The salt is now to be mixed with about half the amount of chalk (calcium flour) or with crushed powdered sea shells. I have tried both, and there doesn't seem to be any difference in the end product. When these two things are mixed, boiling water is added, until a thin porridge has formed. It is then reduced until its dry. Then one pours a large amount of boiling water over, and lets the mixture rest for awhile.

In the meantime one can place a funnel in a bottle or over a bowl. The funnel is to be lined with paper towels or filter paper.

Then the mixture of salt and chalk is poured through the funnel. It is best to let the water slowly flow down the sides of the funnel, to avoid making a hole in the bottom of the paper. When the salt water has run through, the paper is set aside, because the chalk isn't needed anymore.

One then again reduces the salt, and adds a new portion of chalk, again approximately half the amount of the salt. This process is repeated about three times, and one finally has a portion of salt water, that has taken in something or other from the chalk. It is this salt that is now to influence the white or bluish silver chloride.

When the salt water has been reduced to a thin porridge, about the same amount of silver chloride is added. These two are mixed and heated until almost dry. It is then left to cool down. Then a very small amount of nitric acid is added. The liquid now fizzles, because there is always a remnant of chalk left, and this gives of carbon dioxide. The silver chloride now becomes deeply violet.

This is a strange reaction, and is, as far as I know, not mentioned anywhere else than in alchemical literature.

The silver chloride is washed once and then poured into a heat resistant bowl. It is then heated to dryness several times, and between each reduction boiling water is added drop-wise.

The silver chloride will now gradually change colour. Sometimes pink, sometimes dark violet or indigo colored. If one continues heating and adding boiling water, the color finally turns into a beautiful chocolate brown.

The same colors are to be seen in the sea shells and conches. The largest and oldest of them have had time enough to form both pink, blue, violet, and brown colors, and the latter is usually on the outside of the shell.

I first read about the silver salts ability to change color in a collection of alchemical tracts that had been published in the 1700s on the Duke of Orleans' private book press.

The collection consists of various anonymous alchemists experiences, and all the books recipes are very detailed and precise. The book, 292 pages, has been reprinted in its original form with the title: *Traite de Chymie, philosophique et hermetique* (Jobert, Paris)

In the animals inside the conches a natural slow digestion of those small organisms and matters, that are present in sea water, takes place. If it's (the ocean) polluted with heavy metals, the colors on the sea shells will lose their beautiful hues and become murky.

So there has without doubt been many more beautiful conches and sea shells in the past than in our days, and that could be another explanation of why they where such a popular motif among the alchemists.

Fulcanelli in his *Les Demeures Philosophales*, describes how silver can be brought to show, that in its innermost it is completely royal red. (vol. 1, 190-191)

The experiment he mentions is exciting, but treacherous, and it confirms that silver, or Luna as it is called in alchemy, lives up to its name as a lunefuld (shifty) metal.

One begins with the white silver chloride. As already stated, it is precipitated in the form of a cheese-like, heavy precipitate, when one pours a concentrated salt solution onto silver nitrate.

Silver chloride, with three times as much ammonium chloride, is placed in a wide necked flask that can withstand heat. The matter may only occupy the bottom of the flask, and over its mouth is placed a small bowl of ice cubes.

The mixture is now to be heated, until the ammonium chloride rises up and settles on the bottom of the bowl, as a white sublimated matter. It is scraped off and dissolved in a bowl of distilled water.

One will now see, that on the bottom of the bowl is a highly red fine powder. It comes from the silver and has been drawn along with the ammonium chloride. So the inner core of silver is highly red, and J. R. Glauber said the same in his tract from 1659.

Fulcanelli says the experiment is treacherous and unreliable , because the flask often cracks when the heating has taken place for some time. Or it can happen that the silver chloride migrates into the glass walls, colours them red, whereafter it disappears into open air.

I have done the experiment myself, and that was just what happened. The most interesting thing in connection with the red color in silver is, that it owes its appearance to the ammonium ion—natures jester, that is capable of almost anything. As we have already seen, it can be formed in water that evaporates in the open. This was proven by the Danish researcher Schønbein in the last century. According to alchemists the influence from the air is especially powerful at full moon, and it is amazing how much ammonium salt can be formed in the water.

The largest amount, that I have gotten up to now was two nights in January, while the full moon was in the sign of Cancer, the moons own sign, and that does give food for thought.

The sea shell, especially the (Jacobs shell), "La Merelle," was an often employed symbol of the medieval alchemists.

Fulcanelli mentions it in his book, *Les Mysteres des Cathedrales,* p. 202, that the rich French merchant and alchemist, Jacques Coeur, ornamented his house facades, windows and niches, with the sea shell. But why one might ask, and what is the explanation?

Some sea shells and conches have as already mentioned, pink and blue violet, mother of pearl like colours, that the shell itself produces. These colors on the shell we can bring forth ourselves, by placing white beach shells or conches in a glass bowl of water, to which there has been added a few grains of the mysterious substance called the Philosophers Stone. This unusual matter is a gold or silver compound, and will be described later.

After a few days, the white shells will begin to take on pink and violet hues just like the natural ones. The colours are identical.

If one leaves the shells in the water for some weeks, the colors will become even stronger, and fine purple powder will form on the bottom of the bowl.

One can now take the shells up and then stir along the sides of the bowl with a glass rod, until the powder has converged in a heap in the middle of the bowl. If one doesn't get it gathered there, it will stain the sides of the glass bowl. Same phenomena occurs when working with pure fine gold powder, and it was a similar technique, glassmakers of the past used for manufacturing purple colored church windows and stained glass.

When the water in the bowl has become totally clear, the liquid is decanted and reduced to dryness. One will then see, that there is a little calcium present from the sea shells in the powder. It is seen as white spots and can be dissolved with acetic acid. Again stir along the sides of the bowl, and when the liquid is clear, decant it. The purple powder is washed with pure water, and finally reduced to dryness.

The mysterious thing about this process is, that the purple powder is a gold compound, and there is even more, than was originally added.

Sea shells and conches have always been a symbol of wealth and abundance. The oil company Shell uses it as we all know in our days. And in many catholic churches the baptizing fonts and holy water containers are made in the shape of a sea shell. The classic horn of plenty, the "cornucopia," is shaped as a conch from which flows fruits and flowers in abundance.

Here I think we have a pointer to why the sea shell was such a popular motif with the alchemists of the past. They got the gold to multiply, and the new gold matter had a violet colour.

This violet color can by the way be reproduced with ordinary fine and completely pure gold powder that has been diluted and blended with water, and the same goes for silver chloride.

On warmer beaches than ours (Scandinavia) one can find conches with a porcelain like brown and white spotted, shiny, smooth shell. If one looks inside them, one finds that they are violet inside.

It is not so apparent why sea shells also where used as symbolic elements in churches and cathedrals. Perhaps religion and alchemy once had a common point of origin. We will return to this later.

[Translators remarks: Where I wrote rosy, I guess it should be pink]

Note 1.

4 degrees Celsius is the temperature at which water has its highest density. When water is cooled down, it will become denser and denser, until it comes down to 4 degrees, it will then expand slightly, and then, as we all know, expands about 10%, when going from a liquid to a solid, from water to ice.

Most natural spring waters should come forth from their springs, at that exact temperature, 4 degrees. See the works of Victor Schauberger, the Water Wizard, if one wants to know more about the mysteries of water. F. x. that a spring can dry up, if its "spout" is subjected to direct sunlight, if its shade giving surrounding trees and vegetation are removed and much more.

THE ROSE AND THE CROSS

The almost surrealistic combination of two unrelated things became the symbol of the Order of the Rosy Cross, and it happened sometime around the year 1459.

But behind the symbols lies a long and bloody history, and it begins in southwest France, in Provence De Languedoc, in the 12th century.

Early in the medieval era religious sects and brotherhoods had formed all over Europe, and they had in common, that they with more or less covert means fought against the often very evil and greedy society they lived in. They weren't on good standing with the roman catholic church either, because their beliefs in many ways deviated from the churches.

These sects and brotherhoods had on their agenda to help their prosecuted and poor fellow men—product of the persisting strife between the ruling classes. The sects consisted of true humanists. They seldom took a name and lived anonymously and Spartan. They where against a long row of the church dogmas and especially the theological machinery of papal rule.

They preached a Christian teaching, but in a form that they insisted was in tune with the original intention of Christianity, love, tolerance and humbleness.

In the years 1100-1200, this belief and life style was openly displayed by the Cathars, also called the Albigensers—the purified and white—and this would turn out to be disastrous.

The Cathars had their stronghold in south western France, and had possibly migrated from countries south or east of the Mediterranean Sea, from where they brought a Gnostic belief, the essence of which was that only the soul is created by God. Everything material, including the human body, was the work of the Devil.

The Cathars attitude to everything living was, thou shalt not kill. So they were vegetarians and subsisted on the "fruits of the earth." At the same time their women had equal rights, and they had a liberal and understanding attitude towards divorce.

But they had the catholic church against them, and it didn't get any better when they inaugurated female priests. The Cathars were skilled craftsmen. They erected paper mills, and it turned out to be a good business. They also produced the sought after copper salt, vitriol, which originally was called "veridis aeris." This emerald green copper salt was utilized as both a pigment in paints, and a necessary matter in alchemy.

The Cathars produced it by layering copper strips between pressed grape pressings. Thereby the metallic copper oxidized and united with the acids from the grapes, to form the sought after green salt.

At the same time many Cathars travelled around Europe as merchants, troubadours and preachers, and began to gain some influence, but on a different base than the rest of medieval society.

The French historian and author, Déodat Roché, claims, that the Order of the Rosy Cross stems from the Cathars, because these people were the only ones that were wholly dedicated to the Order's at once simple and exclusive life style (*L'eglise romaine et les cathares albigeois*).

The German mystic and philosopher, Jacob Boehme, who lived 1575-1624, was a Rosicrucian with the Cathars beliefs, but in our days he is termed "pantheist"—a much to narrow and imprecise designation for such a wide spanning personality. The south French Cathar movement with its altruistic attitude to humans created the first rosy crossers already in the 12th century, but this order actually was to get its name some hundred years later after the German monk Christian Rosenkreuz, who is believed to have been born in the year 1388.

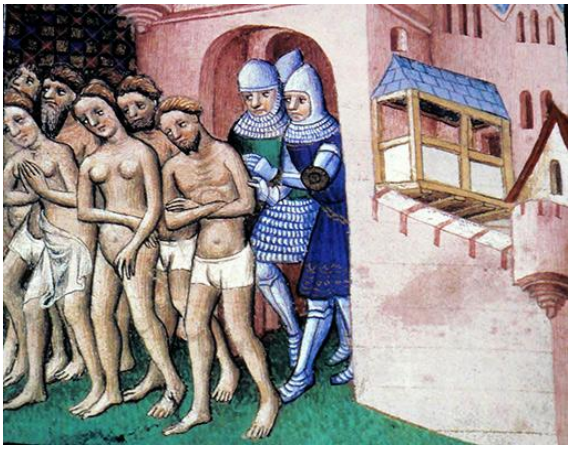
Around this figure there always has been a certain aura of mystery. His name was likely at once a pseudonym and a symbol for an alchemical process. Because Rosycross, das Rosenkreuz, la Rose-Croix, etc., was unbreakably tied to the greatest secret of alchemy.

The cross itself had equal sized arms, contrary to the roman catholic, whose middle arm was longer.

Behind all religions lies the principles of both religion and alchemy: to separate the pure from the impure, and to find the truth, that is, the core essence of everything. In alchemy it is symbolized by gold.

The process of purification was a "crucifixion," and thereby the cross came to signify purification of matters through a process of dissolution and elimination of the impure in alchemy. For example, the equal armed cross signifies acetic acid in alchemy.

In the 1200s the Cathars deviating beliefs and humble brotherhoods became too much for the catholic church. Its mighty leader, Pope Innocens the III, launched a cruel crusade against them in 1209 and then later again in the same century. One of the worst massacres took place in 1244, but more were to follow.



The Cathars finally succumbed to the violence. Thousands were burnt on the pyres or walled in with bricks alive, until they died.

So ended the first ideology that could have given Europe its first democracy and the first declarations of equality and human rights. The Cathars actually were out on the scene 700 years ahead of their time. But with all this the movement didn't come to a final end.

After the blood baths had been carried out on the Cathars—the roman churches greatest mistake ever—the Brotherhoods of Europe became more secretive. And their anonymous members became even more invisible. An esoteric empire arose.

Books were published under pseudonyms, and the contents had words and phrases that couldn't offend the clergy. Fairy tales and legends were designed that apparently had a secular content, but which alluded to religion and alchemy there inseparably bound together. Only the initiated understood what the tales truly meant.

In England arose the legend of Robin Hood who took from the rich and gave to the poor. He appeared a few decades after the merciless butchering of the Cathars, that is, already before the year 1300, and to this day we are not finished with Robin Hood. He is still going strong, alive and well.

In Germany the "minne singers" had appeared with their love poems. Minne means love.

One of the best known German "minne singers", was Walther von der Vogelweide, whose romantic and political songs where based on the south French troubadour songs.

Walther von der Vogelweide lived until about 1230. He had witnessed the unfortunate circumstances that crushed the Cathars, and in one of his metaphoric "Mood poems" he sings: "Uns hât der winter geschât überal"—"The winter has harmed us everywhere." Precisely this poem is typical of south French troubadour style (Karl Heinz Schirmer: Die strophic *Walthers von der Vogelweide*).

Some of the minne singers also reached Denmark, and that was at a time, where the murder of king Erik Glipping in 1286 was still fresh in memory. A lot of mystery surrounded this royal slaying in The barn of Finderup, and it is still not solved.

The murder took place Saint Cecilia's night, 22 November 1286, but the identity of the murderers is not known for sure. Perhaps it was a ritual killing, or there could be circumstances involved that we cannot understand today. Perhaps the perpetrators where sworn enemies of the catholic church and its henchmen.

The reformation and Martin Luther were still 300 years in the making, though many people were ready for change in the 12 hundreds. It all began with the Cathars open minded and liberal attitude toward religion and humans, but they were too far ahead of their time.

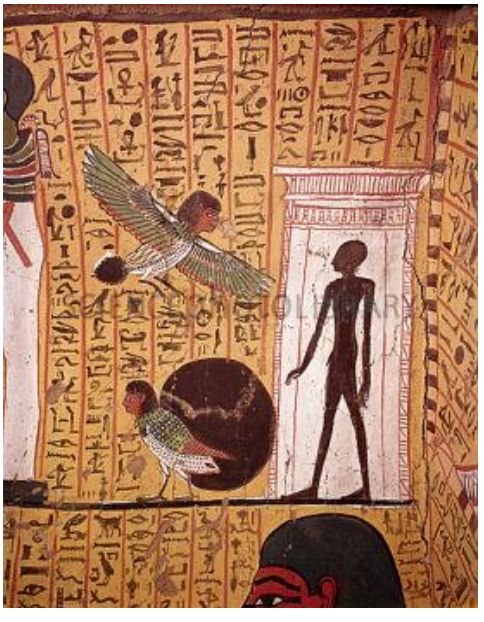
Any transformation in a society as well as in each human being corresponds to the alchemical principle: to separate the pure from the impure and to "crucify" the terrestrial matter, so that the divine soul can be freed. This is and was the Cathars central theme for they considered this earth and, not less so the catholic church, to be the work Satan, because its deeds confirmed this view.

A contemporary French sculptor has created a symbol in stone illustrating the liberation of the soul from the body in the shape of a bird.

When the sun's rays fall through a bird-shaped opening in the stone, the light resembles a quivering "X" and vibrating bird that is about to liberate itself from the hard terrestrial bonds.

This remarkable monument is placed in the center of the old Cathar area, Province de Languedoc, and the artist has in an inspiring way created a clear connection between the old Gnostic religion and alchemy.

The bird corresponds with the liberated soul in both alchemy and the old religions. We meet the bird in the Egyptian Book of the Dead that was in use thousands of years before our era. It was the idea of the Egyptians that after death the soul leaves the mortal coil in the shape of a bird that rises up.



In an illustration from the Egyptian Book of the Dead the deceased's body is seen as black silhouette against the light.

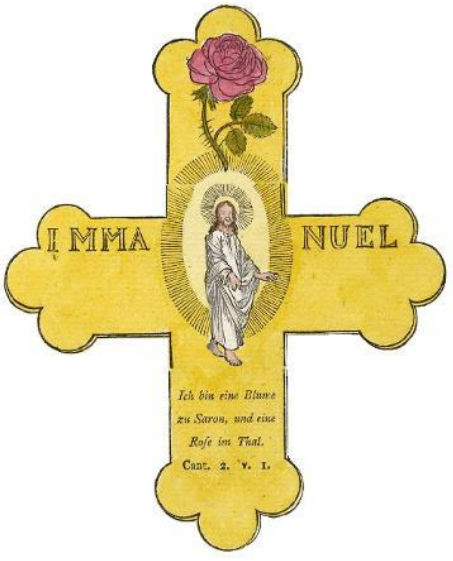
In alchemy we meet the bird again and again. It corresponds to the vaporized matter, that rises up during the process, and flutters up and down, as a bird that bashes its wings.

In our day and age we find it hard to understand the way of thinking of those in times past with its fairy tale like, colourful concepts. They appear to us as a naive and simpleminded language. We are somehow more comfortable with the modern sterile mathematical-physical symbolic language, that does not lead the thoughts towards irrelevant ideas of a religious or mythological origin.

We make sharp demarcations between domains. But can this be done without violating something essential? The alchemists say no, and so do the antroposophers (Rudolf Steiner disciples) and rosycrucians. With the latter me meet the almost unfathomable symbol, the Rosy cross.

At first sight one could associate it with a detail in a piece of surrealistic art or perhaps some mysterious dream symbol. But, nevertheless, the rosy cross is one of the cornerstones of alchemy.

The perfect rose is rosy-red, and this colour is seen in the alchemical process after the raw gold, "the body," has been crucified in the solvent, and then precipitated as an exceedingly fine powder.



The solvent, that is, the acid, has its own symbol in alchemy, the cross. It is the same cross in the same shape, as the symbol of the rosycrucians.

Fulcanelli relates in his, *Mystery of the Cathedrals*, that the cross is a hieroglyph in alchemy, and it corresponds with the Latin term, *Crucibulum*, which means crucible.

This word as is known can also in our day and age be used in different contexts, one among these being to designate a radical transformation of a matter or a human.

Before the raw gold, the "body" of gold, turns rosy red, it is first white or blue violet. These colors are stages on the way to the final matter, the Philosopher's Stone, or the Holy Grail, and the cup of Christ with the red wine.

The white rose is a symbol for the Virgin Mary. The blue rose is the fruitful Mary, and the red rose is Jesus the child, the son of God, the Rock of Ages. White, blue and red rose are still seen in the stained glass windows of many old cathedrals, on frescoes and in paintings, but traditional historians do not have an eye for the occult significance of the three roses and their connection to alchemy.

The white, blue and red rose are real phenomena in the alchemical process. The three colors are the different hues of the purified gold, and a proof, that the gold has been totally cleansed of impurities and is 24 karat. With this matter the process leads to the Philosophers Stone, which transmutes vulgar metals into gold.

The red rose has the color of Christ's blood. Therefore the priest hands a cup with red wine to the members of the congregation that wish for a spiritual transformation. So the cup of red wine is symbolic of the same as the red rose in alchemy and the rosy cross. So the rosy cross is a deeply occult, religious and alchemical symbol, and precisely this cross, more than any other, shows the connection between religion and alchemy.

FAIRY TALES AND ALCHEMY

These two things are bound together in an almost occult and impenetrable way. But there are certain things which distinguish those fairy tales that are about alchemy, or contain fragments of it.

There is often a sorcerer who commits himself with sorcery and other magic arts. Usually he lives in a remote abode or in a castle, and in this there is a secret room that no one may enter.

The interior consists of weird instruments, flasks and retorts, and there are sculls and skeletons. Sometimes there are also birds that flutter around in the corners, or snakes and lizards that creep around in the dark. The whole atmosphere is gloomy.

The issue in that kind of fairy tale with alchemical content is salvation from the demonic, and a kind of resurrection to a life with a new understanding.

A good example of that kind of fairy tale is the one that follows below. It stems from a collection of tales from the Brothers Grimm with the title: "*Fünfzig Kinder- und Haus-märchen*".

These two Germans from the 19th century were experts in drawing the essence out of "folk" beliefs and myths, and one cannot avoid to get drawn in by the simple straightforward style that is spiced with graphic effects and strong undercurrents of horror.

It has often been said, that the Brothers Grimm fairy tales are not for children, and in a way they are not. The tales are rather aimed at people that seek a key to something deeply subconscious or archetypical. For, to some these tales can be a door to that enigmatic universe, where alchemy has its origin, and that adds another dimension.

Brothers Grimm have a tale about a sorcerer that lives deep in a forest. It begins such:

There once was a sorcerer, who disguised himself as a poor beggar, and went from door to door with a sack on his back. It happened, that a young girl opened the door, looked the beggar over, and offered him a piece of bread. Then he made her jump into the sack on his back, whereupon he quickly left. Nobody ever found out what happened to the girl, for she was never seen again.

One day the sorcerer came to a house, where three girls lived together with their father. The oldest daughter opened the door and looked at the beggar. Then she offered him a piece of bread, and he immediately made her jump into the sack. Then he left with hasty steps and went out into a big forest.

In the middle of the forest stood a house, and inside the house there was countless riches of silver and gold. The sorcerer told her she could have everything she wished for, but that there were certain conditions.

Some days later he said, that he had to go away for a few days, and that she was to be alone in the house. He gave her the key to all rooms in the house and told her, that she could go everywhere, but not into a certain room. He also handed her an egg and told her to take good care of it, and to have it with her at all times. If it broke, an disaster would befall her.

She accepted the key and the egg, and the sorcerer left. When she was alone, she surveyed the house and all its riches of gold and silver. At last, she came to the room that she was not allowed to enter, and she hesitated for a moment. But her curiosity was too great. She stuck the key in the door lock, and immediately it sprang open.

She was very much afraid, because inside the room there was scattered chopped off heads and bodies, and there was blood all over. An axe on a chopping block stood among all the dead bodies.

She lost the egg that she was supposed to take care of, and it rolled into a puddle of blood. She quickly picked it up, and tried to rub the blood of the shell, but the stain immediately appeared again.

Sometime later the sorcerer came back, and he immediately asked for the key and the egg. Shaking all over, she handed him the items, and he immediately saw that she had been inside the forbidden room.

"You have entered the room against my will," he said. "Therefore you must die!"

He dragged her off to the room, and chopped her head off, so that the blood splashed all over the floor.

The sorcerer now decided to pick up the other sister and departed. He came to the house, and the sister opened the door. When she gave him a piece f bread, she also had to jump into the sack on the sorcerers back. Then he went back to the house in the forest, and when he some time later again was to go away for some days, he gave the girl the key and the egg. This girl didn't fare better than the first, because she was also curious and opened the door to the forbidden room.

When the sorcerer came home, she had her head chopped of and her body thrown on the floor next to all the others.

Then the sorcerer decided to pick up the third sister. When he came to her house, she opened the door, gave him a piece of bread and had to jump into the sack.

They came back to the house in the forest, and when the sorcerer was to leave again, he gave her the key and the egg.

But this girl was clever and cunning and hid the egg. She then surveyed the house and finally came to the forbidden room.

She went in and saw her two sisters lying in a puddle of blood. She bent over and began to assemble all the bones, until they all fitted together.

When all parts of the bodies had been correctly assembled, the sisters came back to life, opened their eyes and smiled at her.

All were jubilant and hugged each other.

Shortly after the sorcerer came home and demanded to have the key and egg. As there were no traces of blood on either, he said:

"You have passed the test, and therefore you must be my bride!"

But the sorcerer had lost his power over the girl. Now she was the one who made all decisions, and he had to do as she demanded.

She then said, that he should bring a basket full of gold to her family, and the sorcerer had to follow her bidding. Before he left, she hid her two sisters in the basket and covered them with gold. She then whispering told them to have their brothers and relatives avenge the terrible misdeed done to them by the sorcerer.

He went on the way, but the basket was terribly heavy, and several times he had to set it on the ground. But each time there was a voice that said: "Go on!" He thought it was his bride coming back in the house that was yelling after him.

Finally he came to the girls home, where he delivered the heavy basket.

In the meantime the third girl went about in the house in the forest and arranged everything for the coming wedding between her and the sorcerer. She invited all his friends and then took out a, scull. She then placed a band of flowers around its brow and placed it in the window. When everything was set, she smeared herself all over with honey, where after she cut up the feather filled cover from the bed and rolled herself in the feathers. She now resembled a fabulous bird, and nobody would be able to recognize her.

She went out into the forest and on the way she met the wedding guests she had invited. But they didn't recognize her because they thought she was a bird. Finally she met the sorcerer , but he didn't recognize her either. When the sorcerer came back to his house, he saw the scull with the flower band in the window. He nodded and smiled to it because he thought it was his bride. Then he entered the house where all the wedding guests were assembled.

In the meantime the brides brothers and relatives had also arrived, and they hastily closed of all doors and windows and set the house ablaze.

In this manner the sorcerer and all his friends perished in the flames.

This fairy tale is one the finest there is, in relation to alchemy handed down through the ages. The story is colored by the alchemical line of thought, and during the progression of the tale all the mysterious ingredients that belong to alchemical process are interwoven.

If one translates the tale into alchemical terms, it starts out with a sorcerer, the alchemist, who is looking for suited minerals and metals for his work. The two first sisters are two common, vulgar metals, perhaps lead and tin, and these he decides to "kill," that is, dissolve, so that they later can be transmuted and become gold. And they do so over time, but first it is a long and arduous path where his "apprentice," the third sister, finishes the work for him. Then there is no more need for himself.

The egg that may not be broken, corresponds to the alchemical glass flask that contains the important ingredients. Here that vessel is called an egg, because it needs the same constant temperature as a hen's egg. It must have "nesting heat," and therefore the girl may not let go of it, but has to "carry it with her."

It is related in the tale that the egg that the two first sisters dropped on the floor was stained with blood in the ghastly chamber, and the stain couldn't be removed we are told.

This is a very true piece of alchemical information, because the "blood" is the gold elixir, that colors (tinges) all matter that it touches. Gold can in this state penetrate into anything, and this is mentioned in almost all writings about alchemy. This detail is found in many fairy tales and has been the cause of much superstition, because a stain that cannot be removed has to be pure magic. This detail also gives reason to assume that alchemy in the dawn of ages was science that was reserved for the few, and was totally incomprehensible to most people. Instead the alchemical information came to be the fairy tales.

The tale of the sorcerer also contains the legendary death's head, which in alchemy is called "caput mortuum." In place of it one often encounters a whole skeleton. Both are a symbol of the dead matter that has lost its spirit and soul.

These rise up from the bottom of the flask influenced by the heat, and the vapours are pictured as a bird with white wings. That's why the third sister rolls herself in the feathers from the cover. She becomes a bird and disappears into the forest.

The decisive wedding that she is invited to is an allusion to the "Great Wedding," the final phase in alchemy. Here the groom is killed, the raw gold, so as to later be resurrected with a purified body in the form of the purest gold. It is this that becomes the Philosophers Stone and the elixir of life.

A similar tale, but much longer, was told by the German monk, Christian Rosenkreuz. It was issued for the first time in 1616 with the title: *Chymische Hochzeit, The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz* . In this tale we also encounter the ghastly killings, and it is about a real chemical process. The word "chymisch" is an old German spelling and means chemical. The word was spelled with a "y" just as in the French word for chemistry, "chymie", and the latin "alchymie".

In the gospels it is often mentioned, that it is necessary to die in order to be reborn. Some people take this very literally and are counting on a rebirth, a "reincarnation" in this world. Others believe it is a psychic rebirth in the present body. There might be other interpretations, but the truth might be that we are not able to comprehend them with our terrestrial logic.

The Russian philosopher and scientist Ouspensky claims, that matter can only be called dead when its atoms have ceased to vibrate. Such matter is not to be found on this planet, he says, and no terrestrial science can achieve this artificially (*In Search of the Miraculous* p.318).

But if nothing on this planet can die completely, then what is it that is to be changed?

The bible says, that the disciples of Jesus slept when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane for the last time. Also the old Sumerian creation myths tell us that the humans "sleep," and that they even had been blinded by the gods.

Stones and minerals also sleep, and only an external stimulus can awaken them. It is this that alchemy is about. The sleeping matters on earth and the sleeping beings are to be awakened and become as they were before "The Fall," that is, purified and brought back to their original form and state. Nothing can die, only assume another form.

Countless fairy tales revolve around this theme, and in the following we have a fine example of such an awakening from a sleeping state.

The old tale about Sleeping Beauty from the brothers Grimm collection is a wonderful alchemical fairy tale, and on top of that, a truly yummy thing, a tender morsel for a modern psycho analyst.

The tale is about a king and a queen. They represent gold and silver in alchemy, the king and queen of metals.

According to most alchemical texts these two metals are the only ones needed to make either the red or the white elixir that can transmute other metals into either gold or silver, and which also can give perfect health and a long life.

The tale of Sleeping Beauty begins with a king and queen that want to have a child, but cannot.

One day, while the queen is bathing—an alchemical metaphor for purification of a metal—a frog appears. The frog is a sign of change in alchemy. It speaks to the queen and says: "your wish shall be fulfilled. Before a year is over, you will bring a daughter into this world"

The alchemical process is set in motion, and before the year is over, the child is born. Thereupon the king and queen invite twelve guests to celebrate the occasion. They only have twelve gold plates, so for that reason they cannot invite more guests, the story goes.

During the festivities a person steps into the gathering. It is a witch, and she hasn't been invited, so she is envious. She yells: "The royal daughter shall in her 15th year prick herself with a spindle and drop dead."

The witch disappears and all are horrified. But now the 12th guest steps forward. She is a seeress, and she says: "It shall not be death for the royal daughter, but a deep sleep, that shall last a hundred years."

Here we have an alchemical allusion too, that minerals and metals are in a deathlike state when they are dissolved. But they are not really dead because they can be awakened and enter another, different state.

But the king becomes very frightened because of the sorceress's curse and sends out the message that all spindles in the whole country are to be burnt, and so they are.

The day the princess turns fifteen, she is alone in the castle. She goes around in the many halls and by coincidence she comes to a steep spiral stairway, that leads up to an old tower.

She ascends the stairway and comes to a door, wherein there is a large rusty key. The princess turns the key, the door springs open, and she looks into a small tower room. In there sits an old woman by a spinning wheel and spins.

This detail, the tower room, the old lady, and the spinning wheel, are allegoric pointers to something important in the human consciousness and psyche. The tower room, the topmost room in the castle, is symbolic of the princesses physical brain and her consciousness that is present there. The spinning wheel is the thoughts that spin, and spin their endless threads (yarns) continually through life.

We are told that the key is rusty. This tells us that the princess hasn't used the key yet to gain an understanding of her own mind. The old woman is herself, or, more precise, her own eternal soul that is as old as creation.

The princess now greets the old woman and asks what she is doing. “I am spinning,” answers the old woman. “What sort of thing is that, that rattles round so merrily?” asks the princess and touches the spindle. Hardly has she touched it, before the curse is fulfilled. She stings herself on the spindle, and immediately falls into a deep sleep.

Now, strangely enough, the princesses sleep spreads over the whole castle. The king and queen that have returned, fall asleep together with all the servants. Yes, even the horses in the stables fall asleep, then the hounds in the yard, the doves on the roof and the flies on the wall. Even the fire in the fireplace settles down. The wind lies down and not a leaf is moving on the trees.

This is an interlude in the alchemical process, where the minerals are hibernating. They have been dissolved and are later to form new compounds. This takes time, and therefore the sleep lasts a hundred years.

Then the tale proceeds with a thorny hedge growing up around the castle. It gets higher year by year, and finally envelopes the castle so it cannot be seen.

This detail shows that the alchemical work is hidden from the surrounding world, observation. The process takes place in a kind of castle which in alchemy is called an “athanor.” Nobody may enter while the work proceeds. It is now rumoured all over the land, that there is a beautiful princess behind the thorny hedge. Therefore many guys who want to propose marriage try to penetrate through the hedge, but it is impossible. Everybody gets stuck on the thorns, and die a pitiful death.

This trait shows that many have tried to solve the riddle of alchemy, but had to give up.

A hundred years later a prince comes to the land. He hears an old man tell about a thorny hedge around a castle in which there is a beautiful princess by the name of Sleeping Beauty. The old man also tells that many suitors have tried to penetrate the hedge, but that all died in the attempt. The prince says that he fears nothing and that he wants to see the beautiful princess.

This part of the tale shows, that one cannot shorten or interrupt the alchemical process, before the time is ripe. Time stands over all things, and the process requires its own maturation time.

But now the hundred years that the curse had predicted have passed. Just then, the young prince arrives, so time gives its permission that the castle may be opened.

When the prince comes to the thorny hedge around the castle, it stands in full bloom with beautiful flowers. The hedge willingly opens up for the prince, and lets him slip through.

The prince enters the castle and sees, that everything is sleeping right from the king and queen to the fire in the fireplace. Everywhere there is a deep silence.

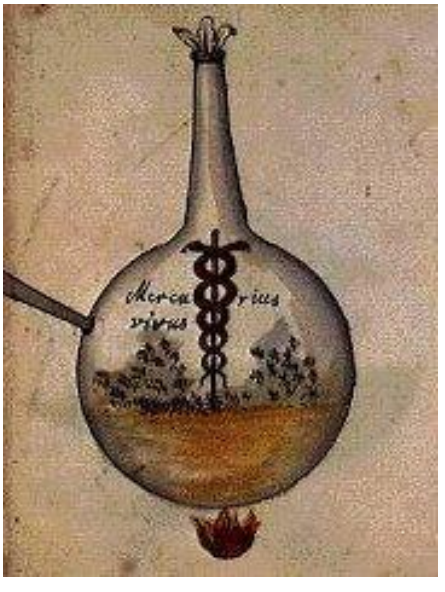
Finally he comes to the tower room, where he sees the sleeping princess. She is so beautiful that he cannot help giving her a kiss. In that instant Sleeping Beauty awakes, opens her eyes and smiles at him.

It is worth noting that the old woman is gone. She has become the awakened and conscious princess.

Then the prince and princess go together back to the king and queen who have awoken in the mean time, and together with them, the horses in the stables, the dogs in the yard, and the doves on the roof.

The fairy tale ends in traditional style, with the prince and princess getting married in a magnificent wedding, and they live happily ever after to the end of their days.

This story is both an archetypical fairy tale and a description of an alchemical process. The point in alchemy is, that not even silver and gold are completely noble metals before they have been through a long and radical process. Then they are so pure, that they are able to transmute the common metals.



Alchemy spins its golden thread through many fairy tales. This also happens in the tale of Snow White, who apparently lies dead in a glass coffin, after she has been poisoned by the evil step mother. The poison in alchemy is the universal solvent, also called "Mercury," whose staff is entwined by a snake, from whose fangs the poison drips.

What is essential in these tales are the persons, or "matters", that participate in the story. They are allegorical figures while they at the same time serve as pure entertainment.

In the fairy tale about Snow White there are seven dwarfs, who each day work deep in the mountains. These small beings are the natural forces that are at play inside the mountains, and who create minerals, crystals, precious stones and noble metals. Therefore they belong in a tale where the theme is transformation, death and resurrection.

In another tale, the one about Cinderella, we again meet the ingredients that makes the story a hidden tale of alchemical processes. At the same time, the storyline is in itself so entertaining, that the tale is one of the most popular ever. The poor girl in the tale is named Cinderella. Her

name directly refers to a necessary ingredient in alchemy, potash. (Cinderella and potash are synonymous, they mean the same. In Danish Cinderella=Askepot=potash)

Potash is known by most as the baking powder that is used for making brown cakes at Christmas time. In France it is used to bake a certain type of cake around "The three Holy Men's Day," January the 6th . Traditions around this cake have their roots in alchemy. Fulcanelli mentions it in Mysteries of the Cathedrals.

The alchemical glass vessel is equivalent to the glass coffin in the fairy tale of Snow White and the seven dwarfs. The bodies are in a deathlike state, but they are not really dead, because they are brought to life again.

Chemically speaking potash is identical with potassium carbonate. Earlier one got this matter from the ashes, that were scraped out of the fireplace, when the fire had gone out. In that state it is a grey and not highly regarded waste matter that was thrown directly on the compost heap. But the alchemists utter as with one mouth: people should only know what it is they discard. They step on it and count it for nought.

The name Cinderella comes from the word cinders, which means combusted matter from the fireplace. In French she is named *Cendrillon*, again formed from the word for ashes: *cendre.*

The point or essence in the tale about Cinderella is that this girl is the only one that fits the golden slippers that are worthy of a future queen.

This might at first seem quite fanciful and illogical, but things fall into place when one knows that alchemists used potash to precipitate gold in a fine and almost ethereal form. Here the golden slippers enter the picture.

Potash has a base pH in aqueous solution. When it is added to a gold salt in an acidic solution, the gold will precipitate as a very fine dust, that settles on the bottom of the bowl in which the solution is. This dust is completely pure 24 karat gold.

J. R. Glauber called it "atomized gold," and one needed to know how to prepare it if one wanted to produce the Philosophers Stone. Because this product consisted of extremely fine gold particles, so tiny, they could penetrate into all existing matter.

The method of using potash to precipitate gold is, as far as I know, completely unknown in our days, and I have not been able to find it mentioned in any of the traditional chemistry books. But the method works, and the gold one gets, is so fine, that it seeps into even the smallest crack in a glass or ceramic bowl. The bowls surface takes on various colour hues, from red violet to rosy red to purple. It was this

fine gold that was used to produce the beautiful red and purple coloured church windows in the medieval age.

There are countless fairy tales, where alchemy plays a part in an occult and almost impenetrable way. But if one has worked practically with alchemy, one discovers, bit by bit, which elements or pieces have been used to build up a fairy tale's storyline and point or essence. This makes them in a way even more interesting as it leads the thoughts back in time, because alchemy must be older than the fairy tales that are built upon them.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

Alchemy is at once a science, a craft, and a magic art. Much also indicates that it could be a forerunner of religion, or at least has developed parallel to the religions. Because the core of alchemy is the birth of a "royal son," whose father is the divine sun, and whose mothers is the virginal moon who affects the seas and waters wherein all life began.

The Royal Sun is the Philosopher's Stone, and it is known in many languages. In English it is called "The Philosopher's Stone", In French "Notre Pierre" or "Pierre Philosophale", in German "Unser Stein" or "Der Stein der Weisen". In Danish "De Vises Sten", etc…

This strange "stone"—which in fact is a powder—is mentioned in countless books, and it is said about it, that it can transmute common vulgar metals into gold. At the same time it can give us perfect health and not the least a higher consciousness and more intelligence. That is quite a bit indeed, but what is it actually for a kind of matter?

In our days we find it hard to accept old esoteric explanations, we demand a factual and logical explanation of things, and what they are.

According to the many descriptions that have been given of the Philosopher's Stone, chemically speaking it must be a complex, as yet unknown gold compound, where the gold itself exists in a very compact combination with elements, that can easily be absorbed by the body, for example sodium, potassium, nitrogen and chlorine compounds, plus hydrogen and oxygen.

The Philosopher's Stone can appear as either a powder or a liquid. As a powder it is a very heavy, orange red and crystalline matter, whose single grains appear needle like and glassy. The powder smells like sea salt, and some also say, it has an iodine like smell.

It can be dissolved in absolute alcohol, that is, ethanol. But the alchemists say, it should be dissolved in wine spirits, that is a better product than technically manufactured alcohol.

In solution the Philosopher's Stone is a clear red liquid. It should only be taken drop wise in wine spirits as an elixir. In larger amounts the matter can be deadly. Because it's radioactive and might cause, one to lose hair and nails, and even the teeth might fall out. But they grow out again, and it is said, that one is in this way totally rejuvenated.

Nobody has, as far as I know, had this strange stone analysed in our time. Yet it is now and then described so thoroughly, that one would think there existed some knowledge about its chemical composition. But those who know something, hide their knowledge and put up a smokescreen around the way this matter is produced. They justify this by claiming humanity is not mature enough (yet) to deal with such a matter, and they might indeed be right.

Apart from this, most countries health authorities would probably send out warnings, bans, propaganda against the (preposterous producers of radioactive "health supplements." Wealthy medical corporations would do everything in their power to have an item like this removed, and MD's would unite in the effort to have the alchemist branded as a quack.

So there are enough reasons for not being outspoken about alchemy, if one is engaged with it. One could end up with really big trouble.

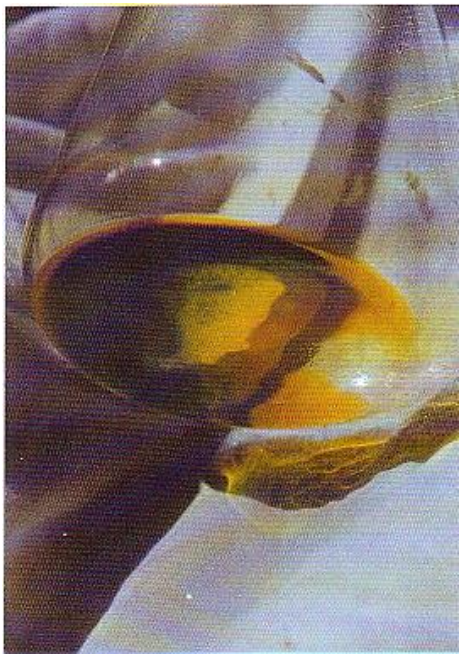
In the preface to his two volume work, *Les Demeures Philosophales*, the Master Fulcanelli writes that only an "adept," that is, an initiated alchemist, knows how far he can go, and what might threaten his existence.

In spite of this, many have embarked on the alchemical path. Partly because they find it fascinating, partly to find out if there is something to it (the tales). Is there really a matter, that can transmute lead or tin into gold? And if there is, how can one find out about it? Where does one begin, and which books can one take advice from?

There have been written thousands of large and small books about alchemy. Both contemporary and old ones from the medieval age. Before that there were Arabic, Egyptian and Greek manuscripts. They were translated into Latin, and then into other languages, especially French.

The oldest one I have myself, was translated from Latin around year 1150 under the title *Turba Philosophorum*, later published in French under the title *La Tourbe des Philosophes* (Jobert, Paris).

In this book there is a large number of interesting pieces of information and "cue words" about alchemical processes. I will mention some of them, because they form an excellent foundation to build upon.



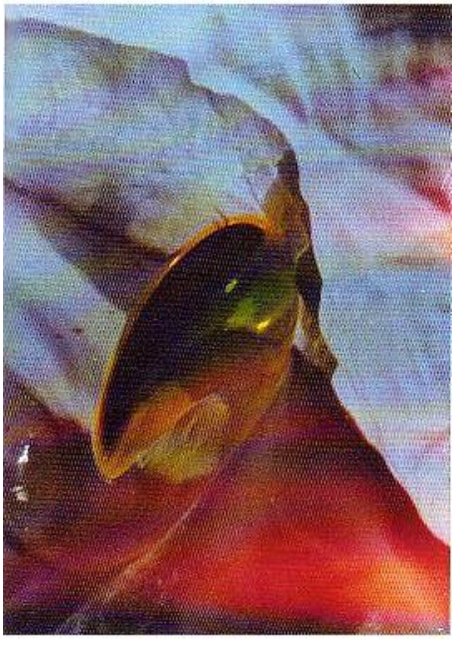
The book is built up as a number of dialogues between philosophers and alchemists, and the various participants take turns at giving their own explanations of how the Philosophers Stone can be made.

The first to speak is the Master La Tourbe. He refers to the Greek philosopher, Pythagoras. He had said that one should find a red matter that turns white when heated, and then turns red again. This matter was important to get hold of because it was used to make the tincture that gave eternal health.

The red matter, that Pythagoras mentioned, is a gold salt. Because if one dissolves completely pure gold in royal water, one gets a yellow liquid, that by a very gentle and gradually rising heat changes color and finally ends as a red powder. On the left is seen the yellow liquid, wherein the pure gold is dissolved.

The red powder, that is produced, can by repeated dissolutions and precipitations (tr. solve et coagula) become completely white. It will turn red again, when heated very gently.

The next speaker in the book discloses something about the liquid, that the original metal is to be dissolved in. He calls the liquid "the permanent sea water." So it has to be a chlorinated liquid, namely the one that in earlier times was called "spirit of salt." This corresponds to HCl, hydrochloric acid in our days, and the alchemists produced it from sea salt and clay.



When hydrochloric acid and nitric acid are mixed in the ratio three to one, chlorine is released, and if there is gold present, gold chloride will form. This matter varies in color from yellow over orange to red.

The same speaker tells, that one must carefully reduce the liquid with a gentle heat, until one has a syrupy mass that finally becomes a red powder. He calls the powder for "sunflowers"—Fleurs de soleil . With this name it is revealed that it is about gold. For the sun is synonymous with the metal gold in alchemy.

It is familiar to astrologers, that the sun rules the sign of Leo and has to do with the metal gold. Something similar was

the case in old Egypt, where the cat was a symbol of the royal and elevated. A king was often mentioned as the "cat," and he was equipped with a death mask of gold. Cats were also embalmed and considered holy animals. No one was allowed to kill them.

The difficulty in reading the old alchemical texts, lies in breaking the code, that covers over the different matters. The code can be words, pictures or allegories, but with a little knowledge of chemistry it is possible to break the codes, so the texts can be translated.

For example the medieval alchemists called their metallic raw material "the body to be purified," or "the king to be bathed." When this king then rises from his bath, his body is all red, which again reveals that we are dealing with gold that is dissolved in "royal water."

One meets over and over again comparisons or wordplays that are almost impossible to see through. A good example is the mysterious "green lion," that figures in all alchemical literature. In the illustration of a ferocious lion devouring the sun, the moon is to be seen in the waters beneath; we see a lion in a strange situation: it is devouring the sun.

In such manner the alchemist J. D. Mylius perceived the green lion. It is to be seen in his work *Philosophia Reformata* from 1622. The stars on its fur tell us that it represents gold. The same stars are often seen around the head of Mars, the warrior god, and they suggest, that even iron can be elevated to a noble metal.

In another picture one sees the Lion in the process of swallowing a red liquid, that comes from the sun. The Lions fur is green on the original picture, for it is said that it signifies a stadium in the alchemical process where the work begins, and here the gold is still immature. Later the lion turns red, but first it must drink the suns blood, that is, completely pure gold.

But where does the strange designation come from, and how did it come about? I think the explanation lies in the French term for the "Green Lion", which is "le Lion vert." One doesn't find a logical explanation in the English expression "the green lion" or in the German "der grüne Löwe."

Old Latin alchemical scripts where usually translated into French first because a roman language was more closely related to Latin than the other European languages (see tr. Note 1).

The designation “le Lion vert” contains a clever wordplay, because the adjective “vert,” green, is pronounced in the same manner as the substantive “verre,” which means glass.

It comes from the Latin expression “oleum vitri,” which means oil in glass. Pronounced in French “oleum” would sound somewhat like “Lion.” Then the Latin word “vitri” (genitiv of vitrum, glass), became the French word for glass, namely “verre”. Thereby a wordplay arose, because “verre” sounds like “vert.”

So the picture of the green lion could have originated as a result of a deliberate manipulation with words to hide what the process was about. At the same time it fulfilled the medieval urge for graphic instead of scriptural expression.

The Latin designation “oleum vitri” represented the oily liquid, that appeared, after the green Lion, the immature gold, had been dissolved and reduced to “vitriol.” When that had taken place, the Green Lion could become a red powder, which was called the “Red Lion”

The illustration shows a Lion diving headlong into a flask; at the bottom of the flask is a lunar crescent.

The lion is on its way down into a flask to be dissolved, and it is actually an incredible humor that lies behind such an idea. The alchemists probably had a royal laugh.

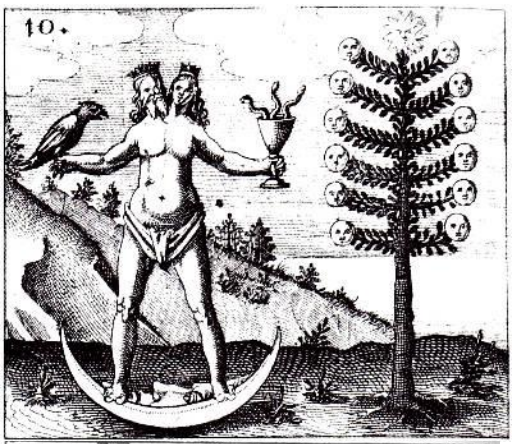
The medieval age was full of fables and fairy tales. They were behind that times architecture as a basic idea, and they made up the exterior and interior decoration of village churches and cathedrals. They appeared in delicate fresco paintings and popular art. These areas were a true cornucopia of colorful monsters and ghosts, kings and queens, devils and angels. We have become poorer in our day were they are gone.

The Green Lion is a central figure in alchemy. It isn’t mature yet and can only become perfect if it is nourished by a matter with which it is related. The related matter is the “blood” that comes from the sun, that is, pure gold pictured previously in the illustration of the green lion devouring the Sun.

The American writer Israel Regardie writes in the book, *The Philosophers Stone*: “Feed them with the flesh of their own species” (p. 111). This means that gold must be fed gold. And silver must have silver. Because the Philosophers Stone could also be made of silver, and in that case all common metals were transmuted into silver.

From the early medieval age we have the previously mentioned book, *La Tourbe des Philosophes*. Here one reads about the same relations between matters, but with another choice of words. It says that the groom's sister, who was beautiful and white was led to him. Where after the "Great Wedding" took place, and they gave birth to a son, the Philosophers Stone.

The idea of of a royal couple that are related with each other leads the thoughts to the ancient Egyptian religion where the God-King couple, Isis and Osiris also were sister and brother. In the ancient religion lies the origin of alchemy which is also what the great alchemists through the ages have claimed. Therefore it is mentioned, over and over, that the wise Hermes Trismegistus, the God Thoth, was the creator of alchemy.



223. *Mortificatio*, or *nigredo* and *putrefactio:* Sol and Luna overcome by death after the *coniunctio*.—Mylius, *Philosophia reformata* (1622)

According to him all alchemical matters must be brought back to the natural state, in which they originally were. This means that they at the same time are to be as untainted beings without gender. In the alchemical image world such a being is shown as a hermaphrodite containing both genders.

In the three pictures on the left are shown three different images of this hermaphrodite being. They come from J. D. Mylius' *Philosophia Reformata*.

On the first, this man/woman stands on a Lunar crescent, and that indicates, that the moon has a power, that is necessary for this unification. The same information we got from the *Mutus Liber* images.

On the second, the hermaphroditic being is seen lying on a coffin. There are clouds above them, and it is raining. This water from heaven is a part of the solvent, the natural spirit, that is to assist, that the two in union can give birth to new life.

On the third image, the unisexual being has two faces.

One shows the sun, and the other the moon. Over them flies a black bird, that is ready to tear them apart. The bird is a symbol of the vapors from the acid, in which they both are to give up their life.

The Gordian knot in alchemy is the "universal solvent" for all metals. In most texts it is called "Mercury".

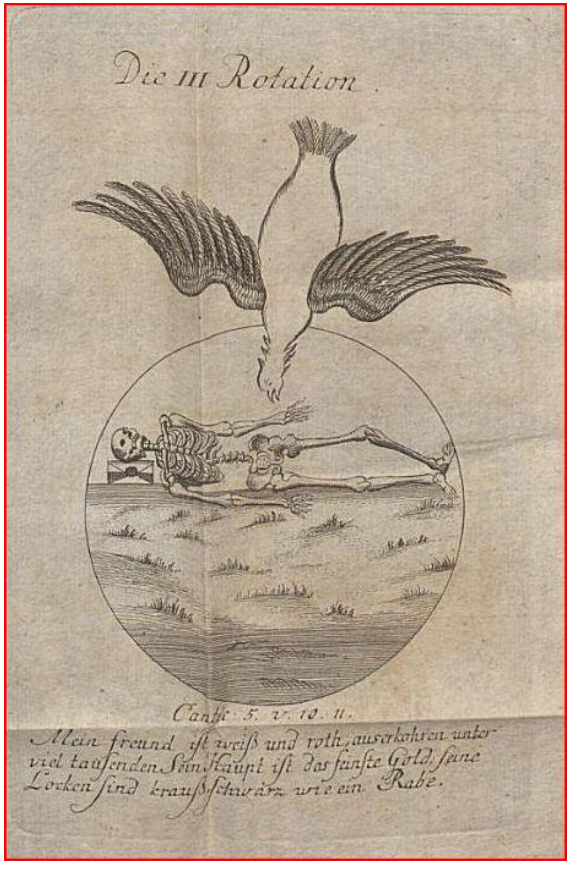
It is to be found everywhere in nature, the alchemists say, and it costs nothing. The peasant in the country side has more of it than the city dwellers, but they value it not. So one reads in the old Rosy cross scripture

Wahrer alter Naturweg [Old and True Natural Path]. The author states Hermes Trismegistus as the true originator of the work. He himself remains anonymous.

In this book the process starts with the preparation of the solvent. The alchemist calls it for ”der astralische Geist, ohne welche keine Verwandlung der Körper erfolgen kann”—the astral Spirit, without which no Transformation of Bodies is possible.

In other parts of the text we meet the designation ”Mercur der Weisen”—Mercury of the Wise. The text relates that it has a penetrating power, and that it is a vapour, that can rise up, condense and descend as rain.

Mercury is sometimes depicted as a bird, what we have just seen in the picture of the sexless being that is laying in a coffin.


Die III Rotation
Cantic. 5. v. 10. 11.
Mein freund ist weiß und roth, auserkohren unter
viel tausenden. Sein Haupt ist das feinste Gold, seine
Locken sind krauß schwärz wie ein Rabe.

By the way, many fairy tales happen to use the motif with the coffin. For example in the tale of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. The seven small men are a kind of nature spirits, that fit well into the alchemical world.

In *Wahrer alter Naturweg* is an illustration that shows a bird diving headlong into a circle that contains a skeleton that is laying on the ground. Here the process has come to a point (stage), where the gold is dissolved and has become a skeleton. The bird, that is, the vapors, is on its way toward the ground, or the bottom of the flask. If the skeleton is to come alive again, the bird is to be united with it, but this will only happen when the bird has flown up and down countless times.

The bird is the white fumes that are to be united with salt on the bottom of the flask. In this way the skeleton is “resurrected,” and finally is formed a deep red powder which is the Philosopher’s Stone.

The alchemist Theophilus Philaletha from the 17th century calls the vapor-like astral spirit, Mercurius Vitae—Mercury of Life. Fulcanelli calls it “Lune hermetique,” the hermetic moon in *Les Demeures Philosophales*.

It is apparent that there is a long list of designations for the solvent, that can be grouped under the term Mercury. He is the messenger of the gods, but he is also a sorcerer, a magician, a nature spirit. He is the restless wanderer Merlin.

C. G. Jung describes him in his autobiography; *Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken* [*Memories, Dreams, Reflections*]. He says that the secret of Merlin lies in the alchemical Mercurius! The legend about him originated in the 12th century, but vulgar people didn't understand what it was about. They feared him as the devil.

In reality he is a nature spirit, Jung writes. He is Mercury or Hermes, and is he the sought after, "Spiritus Mercurialis" of the alchemists. In Europe's great forests he was known as "Grünhütl," who with his green hat hunted with wolves in the night. He was always alone, and often one heard his scream for release—"Le cri de Merlin"—as Jung calls it.

It is this nature spirit that forms the base of alchemy. It is a passive and androgynous element when alone, but it can appear as a being of both genders, and it willingly unites with all matters. Only thereby can a living nature arise.

This spirit is the quick, all present, Mercury with his Caduceus.

Sometimes one sees the goddess of hunt Artemis with her bow and arrow instead of Mercury. She is also a messenger of the gods.

In the illustration from Altuse's, *Mutus Liber* Artemis is seen on the lower left.

The goddess of hunt with the bow hands a flask with a red liquid to a man, that together with his wife, presumably, are occupied with distilling something in large flasks and vessels.

One sees that Artemis has a halo around her head. It shows that she is no ordinary mortal, but a messenger of the gods like Mercury or Hermes. Fulcanelli calls her "mother of all living—mere des vivants".

Artemis was the untainted goddess that roamed freely about in nature with bow and arrow.

Any matter can be divided into three parts the alchemists say. That is "Sulphur, Mercury and Salt."

Sulphur is the soul, and in gold it is red as blood. It is inside the gold powder one gets when gold has been dissolved and precipitated as completely pure gold dust. One doesn't see the soul in this phase because here the gold is a brown powder.

In English literature the soul is called "Sulphur." In French scriptures we meet the term "L'âme" (soul) or "soufre" (sulphur). In German we have the term "Tinktur" or "Öl" (oil).

There is a general agreement in various languages as to what soul is. It is much more difficult to find agreement on what Mercury is. It is described in many ways even though all agree that it is a kind of spirit. In English texts it is called "the spirit" and in French "L'esprit." In German scripts it is called "Mercurius sophicus" or "Essig der Weisen"—vinegar of the wise.

In *Wahrer alter Naturweg* Mercury is described in a way that gives an idea about what we actually are dealing with. Here one reads that Mercury is solvable in water, and that it etches all bodies with its acid—"weil unser Mercur, wenn er in Wasser solvirt worden, alle Körper mit seiner äzenden Säurn zerstöhret"

It is this penetrating, toxic acid that explains the origin of the two snakes that wind about the Hermes staff. This acid is able to both kill and bring alive—"zu tödten und lebendig zu machen"- as is written in *Wahrer alter Naturweg*.

So, the core of alchemy is Mercury, the solvent. On this depends the course of the whole process, for if one doesn't use the right solvent and in the right way, nothing will succeed.

Apart from the way of using the solvent, there is nothing strange about it. All alchemists and chemists know it, and know it consists of hydrochloric acid and nitric acid, "spirit of salt" and "azoth," as it was called earlier.

The term azoth is still used in connection with the so called azo-compounds, that are nitrous components in technically produced chemicals.

The Arabic alchemists had at an early stage in history found out how the mixture of hydrochloric and nitric acid was to be made. One got the ingredients from the dung of camels and goats. This was full of ammonia and sodium chloride, common salt. When the dung was dried and then ignited, it gave off ammonium chloride, and it collected on the lid of the oven in big cakes.

This matter was so highly esteemed, that there was special god, Ammon, for it. He symbolized the value of this ammonium chloride, or Sal Ammoniacum, as it was called in former days. By the way, it was this matter that we in the chapter about sliver used to bring forth the bright red soul of silver.

When ammonium chloride was distilled together with potassium nitrate—salpeter, sal petri, or sal nitre, as it was called, one got a strong solvent for gold and silver.

Now if one lets the vapors from this solvent act on pure gold over a long time, the gold will little by little absorb something from the solvent, which also contains some water. The gold gradually grows heavier. It changes color and becomes white as a skeleton, then yellow, and finally orange red as poppy flowers. Some alchemists compare the color of gold with the red-yellow ring in the narcissus flower.

What happens chemically speaking, when the gold becomes heavier, is not known. But it is possible, that the weight increase comes from the water vapours in the solvent, perhaps hydrogen.

Because something happens to water, that boils for prolonged periods. Firstly it tastes different, and it probably also has a different chemical composition. At least this is what the now deceased Danish researcher, Dr. Phil. Emil Rasmussen, claims. He says that water that has boiled for a long time contains much more "heavy water" than normal water. Emil Rasmussen has never been accepted by established chemists or physicists. They said his theories were "unscientifically" based.

In 1933 came a book by Emil Rasmussen. Its title was *My Atomic Teaching*, an exhaustive work on 227 pages.

The publisher at that time probably had no idea that a Dr. Phil like Emil Rasmussen later would be labelled as an unbelievable fantast by other academics.

After *My Atomic Teaching* came out it was discreetly kept away from all centers of higher learning in the country because Emil Rasmussen claims that the physicists have never succeeded in understanding nuclear processes. They have only found a theory that explain the processes they mention. But the theory is false, he maintains.

About water Emil Rasmussen says, among other things, that it is a false doctrine: water can be broken into oxygen and hydrogen. There is water that neither contains oxygen nor hydrogen, but in their place, one or other element is a gas.

Pure rainwater is a very composite mixture, made of 15 different water molecules, composed of different gasses, that are neither oxygen nor hydrogen.

If one boils this water for many hours or days—and this is what happens in alchemy—one ends up with having a large portion of heavy water.

Water that has boiled for a long time, contains some gasses that chemists and physicists don't know exist says Emil Rasmussen.

So this means, that the chemical formula for water is not H_2O, but a composite of various unknown gasses.

Emil Rasmussen proves his theory on the fact that all matters crystallize in a very definite form dependent on its chemical composition. This is as known chemically correct. One can use re-

crystallization to separate different mixtures precisely because different matters crystallize differently. (see tr. Note 2)

Snow crystals, that consist of water, crystallize in many different (shapes, patterns), and there are just as many different (forms of) crystals as there are elements in the crystals. If water only was oxygen and hydrogen, all snowflakes would look alike, claims Emil Rasmussen. He says (p. 57): "Nature itself has taken it upon her to teach the doubters through a clearly visible, mode of teaching that any child can understand, and which by the way is non refutable."

Chemical textbooks inform us that "ordinary water" contains a minute amount of deuterium, which is a hydrogen isotope. Deuterium is twice as heavy as hydrogen and in ordinary water there is a small amount of this heavy water—D_2O, about 1 part in 5000. That means, if one has about 18 grams of water (1 gram mol), there is only 3.6 milligrams of heavy water in it.

But of this heavy water there becomes more by boiling, says Emil Rasmussen. After several hours of boiling there is neither oxygen nor hydrogen left, but instead some gasses, that correspond to those we find in stellar "dust" in outer space, for example in the "fog" of the stellar constellation the Swan.

It could be something similar that happens in alchemy because the water containing solvent is brought to cook, evaporate and condense again and again for countless hours. The receiver of the heavy water with the unknown gasses are the very fine gold particles, that thereby undergo a transformation. Alchemists call this process "magnetic," and here lies a proof, for the gold attracts something from the surrounding vapour, but it happens at a slow pace.

In the alchemical process one must give Nature time to apply her own laws. Nothing must be forced, because Nature works slowly.

It does its work in one way at night time, and in another way at daytime. During the night its sends its building blocks down over the earth from the moon and starlight. In the day time it builds its houses from the materials that the dew and celestial light have arranged for it during the night. Partly on grass and plants, partly in water and on soil. All this takes place before the sun rises. Nothing can sprout under the suns strong light, and this goes for alchemy too. Therefore the process must be shielded against light.

It can be difficult to unite the various sometimes mythological, sometimes philosophical accounts of the matter, "Mercury." We find it hard to accept myths and allegories, when we would rather have a chemical explanation of it all. At least that is how I felt years ago, but I discovered over time, that our deep roots in the past, our own origins, have to be taken into account if one is to form an idea of what alchemy is based on.

If one has some astrological knowledge, it somehow becomes easier to understand. In astrology the planet Mercury symbolizes the mentally enlivening: the all present intellect and the quick and often incalculable, un accountable element in the horoscope. Without Mercury a horoscope cannot be understood, because here we find the key to the intellect's possibilities and strivings.

Mercury will always be close to the sun in a horoscope, because it is the sun—the gold—it seeks. Gold is as said before the "magnet," that mercury is attracted by, and they mutually influence each other. Mercury can in astrology play either a masculine or feminine role dependent on in which sign it stands. Therefore the messenger in alchemy can be either Mercury or Artemis.

The important solvent and especially the water that is in it, are affected by the character of the air, the moon and the starlight at night time. It is the "fire" from heaven that transforms all matters; it is aid in alchemy. It enters all things and makes them grow and multiply. It is an inner fire and not a common fire as in a fireplace.

Of the common fire the alchemist in, *Wahrer alter Naturweg* says: "Es ist der Tod aller Dinge"— it is the death of all things.

In eastern religions the inner fire is called "kundalini," and it can be brought into action in such a way that man is spiritually reborn.

The kundalini force is shown as a snake that can rise up the spinal column. This corresponds to the snake around Hermes staff, so here is a correspondence between alchemy, esoteric knowledge and astrology.

In relation to how alchemy should be handled practically, there is not much information to be found in the various scripts.

In *Wahrer alter Naturweg* the process is described somewhat thoroughly, because there are some bits of chemical information. We are told how the matter is to behave during the process, and how the solvent behaves, that is, like a strong acid.

There is much to be found in Fulcanelli, but his data comes spread out in the texts, dispersed over several hundred pages.

The point in alchemy is to get the gold one starts out with precipitated in an extremely fine form. This is as said before, done with potash in an aqueous solution. The royal water is only to be just neutralized with the alkaline potash solution. The liquid is neutral when no more carbon dioxide fizzes off. After some time and after thorough stirring with a glass rod one can add a little acetic acid to remove excess potash.

This part of the process is simple common chemistry, apart from using potash to precipitate the gold with. It is not taught in the chemical text books.

Gold can also be precipitated with the matter that is found in the legendary unicorns horn—if one can manage to catch one, for it is very shy. Only a virgin could gain power over it the myths say. These often contain a truth, and in this case the hidden truth is that from its horn, ammonium bicarbonate, could be extracted, also called ("hjortetaksalt," "deer antler salt," "hartshorn").

The same salt is to be found in the horns of deer, goats and bulls. That is why these animals are shown on the images from *Mutus Liber* by Altus, and it is a very important information.

The gold is to be precipitated several times after the motto: Solve et coagula—dissolve and solidify. Then it is to be washed many times and left to stand in diluted (with water) wine spirits, until it gradually turns rosy red.

The alchemists relate that the final process which is also the last “solve et coagula,” is very lengthy, and that it requires “nesting heat.” Therefore this stage is shown as a hen, that is laying on eggs.

The flask is to be hermetically sealed, as it is called after the sage Hermes Trismegistus. And no light may enter the vessel, so one has to find a way of shielding it. This can in practice be done with tin foil [tr.: now a days it's aluminium foil] that is wrapped around the flask.

The flask itself must be so large that the gold mass only takes up the bottom of it, because there must be room enough for the vapours, the “bird,” that during the heating begins to ascend.

One shouldn’t heat for so long that one “burns” the gold. The heat should be as “the sun on a hot August day,” one reads. That would be an August day under warmer straits than the Nordic, and that is a strong heat.

The gold will gradually change color from yellow to red. At the same time the mass becomes more and more compact taking up less and less space. It becomes heavier.

It is in this part of the work that the nature spirit “Mercury,” consciousness, does its tricks and magic arts. What takes place in the flask is unexplainable, but what happens is what in alchemy is called “the great wedding:” the unification of the king and the queen that gives birth to the Philosopher’s Stone.

The vapours in the flask give off something to the gold and thereby lose their power. The “bird” drops to the ground and disappears.

What takes place, could maybe be explained as a nuclear process or a fusion. The alchemist and chemist J. R. Glauber said in the 16th century, that it was a “fusion of salts.”

The theory of fusion at room temperature is, as we know, in strong focus these years. Researchers try to get deuterium atoms to fuse together by electrolysis of heavy water or ordinary tap water. The two electrodes in the

electrolytic cell are platinum and palladium, and it is on the latter that energy is generated in the form of heat.

Here we have a principle that resembles what takes place in the alchemical flask. In this there might take place—as an effect of the long heating time—a nuclear fusion, and the alchemists say it happens at "nesting heat." In reality this heat is more like the temperature of the water that runs through a radiator, around 70-80 degrees Celsius.

The energy that is generated seems to go into developing a completely new product, the Philosophers Stone. It is a heavy, glassy, poppy red matter. It has so much energy that it can penetrate into metallic elements and transmute them into gold. But the process leading to the Philosopher's Stone takes a long time and may not be shortened.

It is The Philosopher's Stone, that crusaders and knights, templars and troubadours have mentioned and sought through all ages. It has been called "the holy Grail, Blood of Christ, "Rosa Hermetica, the Rose on the Cross," and countless other names. It is also the matter that all religion deals with on a spiritual level.

Translator's Note 1: Latin IS a/THE Roman language?

I thought the French (or whatever they were called then) used to speak Gallic, Gaelic, Ghoulish, Garlic, Celtic, Cimmerian, Cimbrian, Catharic, British, Bretonish, Merovingian or some other barbaric, today almost obsolete and extinct language , until the Romans learned/forced them to speak a civilized language, the roman=latin?

Translator's Note 2:

The translator found a copy of Dr. Emil Rasmussen's *My Atomic Teaching*. It is quite interesting reading it. Gold is not an element, but a composition of other elements. The one element that distinguishes gold from so much else is a gas. Amber consists of only one pure element. He has tables over the compositions and variations of various elements according to his teaching. Most of what we call elements are composed of 4,5,6, or more elements, in Rasmussen's view. He lists a number of "new" elements, elements that he has given names.

To make an honest and exhaustive assessment of his rather radical theories, one should read his previous book *The Radiations of Elements*, as this is the basis for his atomic teaching. Haven't found this book yet, but the royal library has it. What I deduced was, that he believes that a pure element can only have ONE resonant frequency/vibration. If it has more, it is a composite of elements. Someone with a better knowledge of spectral analysis and the like might have a better foundation for evaluating Dr. Rasmussen's work.

In Rasmussen's atomic world there are no transmutations possible, only rearrangements of his elements. So, in his view, there would be no alteration of water that boils in a hermetically sealed vessel, unless some of his gasses could penetrate/escape glass.

In any case, the main point is that H_2O is a gross simplification of what water is. Schauberger extends the formula to be either something like HCO, or HCNO (the basic building blocks of organic life), if I remember correctly, water readily absorbs some carbonic acid from the air, and also nitrous compounds as we have seen proven elsewhere. Completely pure H_2O does not exist, unless maybe in some super duper high tech lab.

THE ELUSIVE SMILE OF THE CHESHIRE CAT

One of England's most famous scientists is Isaac Newton. He was born in 1642 as single child of a Lincolnshire (farming) family. In spite of disease in his childhood and plagues, wars and civil uprisings in the country during his life, he got to become 84 years old and very famous.

Newton is today best known as his times mathematical-physical genius, who discovered that solar light consists of many colors, and that there is an empiric and mathematically based law of gravity. What most don't know is that Newton's studies of astronomy and mathematics only formed a part of his sphere of interests. Much of his time he devoted to studies of theology, history and especially alchemy. But this first really came out in the light of day after his death in 1727 and caused a mighty rumble in learned circles.

As the years went, the gossip died down, because Newton was first of all a scientist, so they said. But was he? On the famous Sotheby auctions in London, more than hundred alchemical manuscripts were put up for bidding in 1936. They were all written by Newton, and belonged to a descendant of him. The manuscripts were bought by a certain Lord Keynes who had interests spanning from horse breeding to magic. (*The Foundations of Newton's Alchemy*, B. J. Dobbs, Cambridge University Press)

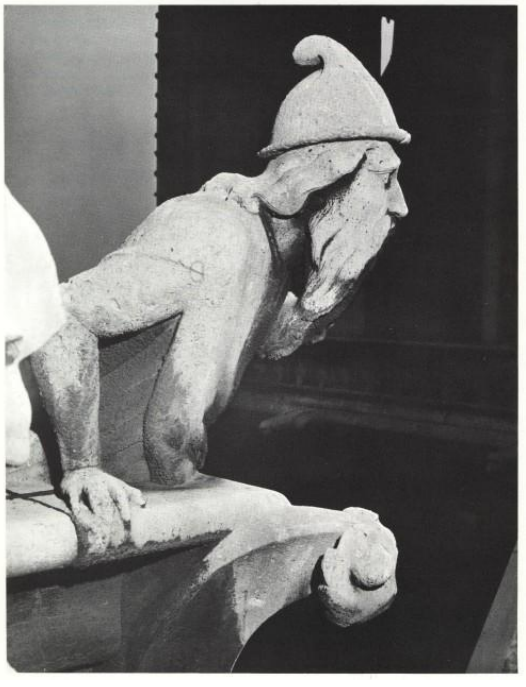
Newton's interest in alchemy had its roots in his conviction that, by experimental method, one could find the way back to a lost wisdom of the ancient cultures. But he was less a philosopher than an experimenter and working chemist. So he tried to reduce the ancient esoteric symbols of alchemical terminology into chemical formulas.

Newton was a practically oriented man. He wanted to transfer the laws of attraction and repulsion of bodies to alchemy, likewise the laws of gravity and the significance of distance. In other words Newton tried to integrate alchemy in a mechanical way, but later it proved that this was not possible.

He continued to be convinced that the Philosopher's Stone could be made, but he never succeeded in producing the fabled matter. It was just as elusive as the smile of the famous Cheshire cat.

Isaac Newton was extremely laborious and perseverant, but when it came to alchemy he apparently ended on the wrong track. The reason could have been a very small but extremely important detail.

This detail is mentioned in Fulcanelli's book about the secrets of the cathedrals. Here is shown a stone figure from the Notre Dame in Paris. It depicts an alchemist(L'Alchimiste, p. 34, *Les Mystéres des Cathedrales*)



The alchemist, who has a strange pointed hat on his head, leans out from the church wall, while his gaze is steadily and continuously fixed on that, on which he is working. He knows he is a part of his own experiment.

Precisely this relation, the observers significance in an experiment, has slowly gained acceptance in modern nuclear physics. It seems as if the presence of an operator or researcher seems to have an influence, that formerly was not taken into account. But why it is so, seems to be beyond any kind of logic or reason.

But it is not necessary to go as far as nuclear physics lab. To confirm the role in an experiment. Anyone can do so without any major efforts.

I first read about the phenomena in a book by the American, Trevor James Constable, titled: *The Cosmic Pulse of Life*.

The author had experienced, that the human eye, or rather the gaze from it, contained some kind of power that could make a cloud in the sky dissolve and disappear. He called the phenomena "cloud-busting."

To disperse a cloud so that it disappears just with one's gaze sounds unbelievable, but it's true, and I have tried it several times. Both alone and together with friends.

The experiment proves that experiment and experimenter make up a whole, and cannot be separated. One could almost say, that there is a short circuit. The experiment is quite simple. One goes out under open sky when there is not much wind, and there are little clouds in the sky. One then selects a cloud, and it is best to start with a small one, until one is familiar with the procedure.

One concentrates one's gaze on the cloud and lets the visual ray, as Trevor James Constable calls it, wander back and forth over the cloud. Then one drills the gaze into it, traces its edges, and then into it again. It doesn't matter if one blinks, as long as one doesn't look anywhere else. After 3-4 minutes the cloud yields, and a few minutes later it is completely gone.

This experiment succeeds every time, but no one who hasn't tried it believes it. There is

only one thing to do: “Go out and do it!” as Trevor James Constable says.

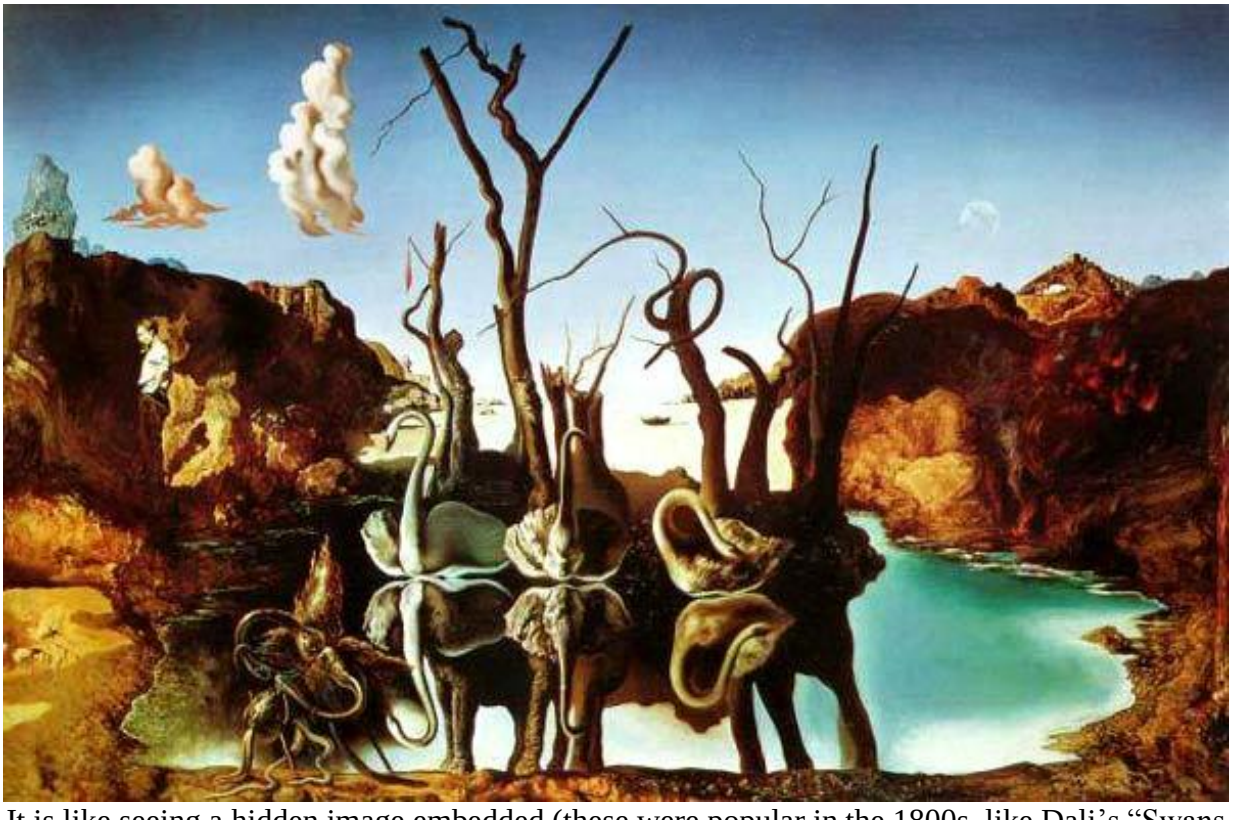
The author believes, that the gaze emits some kind of microwaves, and one can even feel them, if one is not to insensitive.

If one for example lets ones gaze, or “microwaves,” run up and down over adjustable window shades or a fence in the garden, one can feel how the ray from the eye—the visual ray—as the author calls it, hits the flaps or the fence boards. It feels like when one lets a finger slide lightly over the teeth of a comb.

About the phenomena “cloud-busting,” it is a reality, and it is even easy to do. The gaze is simply to be fixed on the cloud steadily and attentively.

It could be a detail of this kind that caused the industrious and incredibly intelligent Isaac Newton to fail at achieving his aims in alchemy.

There probably cannot be any doubt, that Newton's attitude to alchemy was more intellectual than intuitive. He was a mathematical talent and could perhaps not envision that the process leading to the Philosophers Stone was extremely simple when one first finds the point.



It is like seeing a hidden image embedded (these were popular in the 1800s, like Dali’s “Swans reflecting as elephants,” or other surrealistic double images, or the picture that at once portrays an old hag and a young woman) in a forest full of entangled branches. Suddenly the picture is there.

Newton wanted to fit alchemy into the scientific mold with which he already was familiar. So if a transmutation of common metals into gold was possible, it had to be because there was a chemical law behind it all, and it had to be calculable as all other natural laws.

But the alchemists say something else because alchemy is an integrated chemical-biological-physical phenomenon, that among other factors is dependent on how each alchemist treats the matters.

The alchemists say, that their work runs parallel to what takes place in the Nature. Here we can find confirmation of the elements not being as stable as one might believe. Transmutations take place.

An example is experiments performed in the USA, where it has been found that chicken hens could form eggshells, calcium, even when their feed contained no calcium. The chickens can by absorbing potassium, another element, transmute this, so calcium is formed. It happens during digestion, but how is not known. Initially it was thought that they got the calcium from their own bones, but it turned out not to be the case.

An alchemical process and natural transmutation continually takes place also in the atmosphere. Carbon 14, or C14, is formed in the atmosphere's topmost layer through the action of cosmic rays upon nitrogen atoms, and just as much C14 is newly formed, as decays in plants and animals.

But why is it so one might ask? Is there a law that regulates this balance, or is there a thought in the universe with a plan we cannot fathom? Thoughts, as we all know, cannot be caught or calculated. They are just as hard to get a grip on as the smile of the Cheshire cat.

The cat pops up again by the nuclear physicist Erwin Schrödinger, who was a good friend of Albert Einstein. Schrödinger created a series of mathematical riddles that apparently disproved the famous quantum theory. In these riddles the main actor, or factor X, was a cat, that all the time either was there or wasn’t there. It appeared, but then disappeared again without a trace. It was called “Schrödinger’s cat” among researchers and was portrayed as a cat with a human face.

Albert Einstein was very fascinated by these riddles about the cat that apparently proved, that there existed a hidden parameter in quantum theory—a kind of invisible hand, that had a finger in the game.

It is the same in alchemy. There is an incalculable factor, that plays a role in the process that leads to The Philosopher's Stone, and this factor is, and will remain a riddle. Therefore no one can reveal it, because no one really knows what it is. It is a factor X.

There is another famous cat in this world. It is the Sphinx on the Gizeh plateau in Egypt. Just like Schrödinger's cat it has a human face and the body of a cat.

Is it possible, that it has something to do with an ancient science?

THE ENIGMATIC SPHINX

One of the world's strangest and most spoken about monuments is the Sphinx on the Giza plateau in Egypt. The core of this colossus is the cliff on which it rests. Now and then it has been buried beneath the desert sand, but is still in good shape despite the wear and tear of thousands of years in the elements.

The Sphinx appears as a mythical being composed of a lions body and a human face. It has an almost Mona Lisa like smile on its lips, while its gaze pointed to the east with an attentive and awaiting expression. The Sphinx does not sleep. It is like a cat ready to pounce.

What makes the Sphinx different from most other allegorical beings is that it has a human face on an animal body. Because most of that kind of symbolic beings have an animal head on a human body. The Sphinx is different, and it expresses something else, but what?

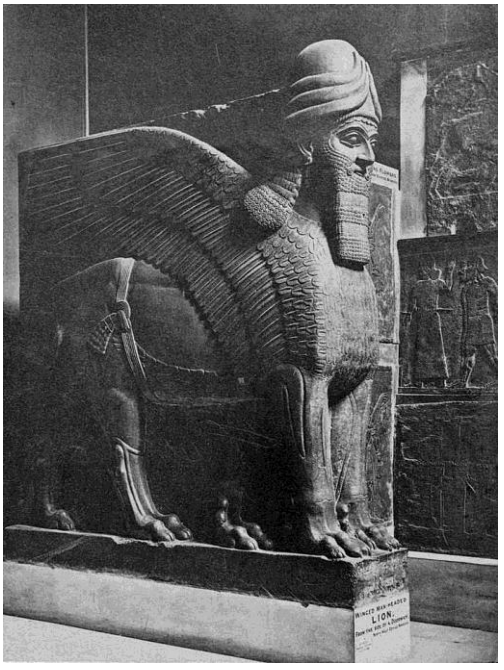
Through the ages there have been countless attempts at solving the riddle of the Sphinx, but it still conceals its secret. Is it at all possible to find out what it means, and why it was placed close to another enigmatic monument, the Great Pyramid—The Cheops pyramid? There could be a solution to the mystery, but it is to be found in a hitherto over looked area.

One knows from sources about the oldest Egypt, that the cat, the little lion, was a holy animal. It was often embalmed like kings and other high ranking members of society, and when a cat died, its owner shaved of their eyebrows to show grief. The cat was a symbol of royal power and wisdom.

It was also a symbol for gold and the sun. That is why the king got a death mask made of the noble metal. At the same time he was "son of Ra," the sun god, and in the thousands of years old, *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Ra was portrayed as a cat that could speak.

But the Sphinx, this unification of a royal animal and a human—what does it mean? One can get closer to solving the mystery with assistance from the *Book of the Dead*.

The English egyptologist, Wallis Budge, translated the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* into English at the beginning of this century. It was titled *Book of the Dead*.



According to Wallis Budge the *Book of the Dead* was in use by the Egyptians from the beginning of the old dynasties, that is, possibly as early as at the time of king Semti-Heseps reign about 4266 BC. (*Book of the Dead*, chapter 64)

The book was found in a grave in Sakkarah together with Pharaoh, Una's, mortal remains. But the texts in the book are not of Egyptian origin says Wallis Budge, because content and phrasing show signs of having been translated from much older material that was difficult to understand.

The job of the Egyptian scribes was to reproduce the content of the original texts. But much indicates that they didn't always understand what it was they were copying. Perhaps the sources for the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* were of Sumerian or Arabic origin, says

Wallis Budge. Other, more untraditional researchers, think it was based the even older *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Both books are a kind of guide for the soul of the dead in the afterlife.

In any case the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* had come from the East. An invasion by a foreign people had taken place in Egypt. They brought with them new bronze weapons, a new culture and art of building, and, not the least, new thoughts. The people from the East influenced Egypt in a decisive manner. It happened at an early stage in the lands history, because according to the *Book of the Dead's* own information, culture and religion were established at a point of time that would correspond to about 4000 BC. In comparison we can mention that David was king in Israel around 1580 BC; that's about 2000 years later.

Decisive for the Egyptians' religion was that the new people brought along a belief in resurrection of humans after death and an eternal life. The belief was based upon that the god/human and king, Osiris, had suffered death by dismemberment, but he was resurrected. And with this the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, which is thousands of years older than the bible, carries the same basic message.

King Osiris is mentioned for the first time in the *Book of the Dead* in the so-called Pyramid text. Osiris is called the "king of heaven" but he was at the same time the "moon god," because he only lived for 28 years, that is, as many years as the days the moon takes to complete a cycle.

Wallis Budge has written a book about Osiris, *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection*, and there he states, that Osiris symbolized the moons regenerative power, because in its emanation there was something that enlivened humans, cattle, and everything that grew on the ground.

With this piece of information we have a parallel to an important point in alchemy. It is clearly seen in the first two previously mentioned plates in *Mutus Liber*, the silent book of alchemy. Here the main theme is the moon light's enlivening influence on the dew on the ground, and on the water that stands in the bowls under the moons rays. The two humans in *Mutus Liber* collected dew from the field in the early morning, because in it was a matter from heaven that they needed.

Osiris is often depicted in the vignettes of the *Book of the Dead,* and accompanying illustrations together with his wife, Isis, who also was his sister.

The kinship between Osiris and Isis corresponds with something which is the basic idea in alchemy. Here the Philosopher's Stone and the elixir of life can only be produced from matters that are related and of the same blood.

This requirement is often repeated in alchemical literature, and it sounds very strange. But if we take a practical example of such a kinship it is quite obvious. For example iron and iron sulphate are related, and the same goes for gold and gold chloride. They belong in the same "families."

Isis was the "untainted virgin" just like Mary in the Christian religion. So there must be a common idea behind both the Egyptian and the Christian religions, and it could be something that stems from an entirely different area than religion.

The *Egyptian Book of the Dead* relates that Osiris was resurrected from the dead. But before this happened—while he was still dead— Osiris and Isis had a son. In scripts from the 6th dynasty one reads that there came a shining from the moon, and that this light fell upon Isis, so she became pregnant.

This corresponds, as earlier mentioned, to a relation in alchemy, because here the enlivening and regenerating matter from the moon is needed. Exactly this matter participates in creating the Philosopher's Stone.

In the so-called Pyramid texts in the *Book of the Dead*, apart from Osiris, the sun king, Ra, is also mentioned. From early on the kings used the title "Pharao," which means "son of Ra," god of the sun. This god is often depicted as a cat that simultaneously was king.

In the *Book of the Dead*, Chapter 17, we read: "the male Cat is Ra himself, and he is called Mau."

The word Mau has two meanings. It means "equal with" and "cat." This means that the sun god Ra is equal to a cat.

Here we might have the beginning of an explanation for the catlike part of the Sphinx, but more is to follow.

In the *Book of the Dead* chapter 17, the divine Cat which is also king says: "I am the Cat which fought hard by the Persea tree."

But what was that battle all about, because the cat is fighting with a snake (see ill. Above. Chapter 17 p. 103)?

The alchemist and graphic artist J. D. Mylius created a series of fantastic images of the alchemical process in the 17th century, one of them is on the following page. The lion, that is, the gold, is finishing off the snake by eating it. The snake is the poison which in alchemy is called "Mercury," and it perishes in the process.

The lion stands in front on the picture. This means it "stands for" or symbolizes the king who is seated behind the table. He is winged and therefore no more a terrestrial being. The two figures seated beside him are not terrestrial either but symbolize Sun and Moon. Each of them shows a "side" of the king, and therefore they are seated to the left and right side of him. He is a

hermaphroditic being in a wedding between his own sun and moon. In our days this would correspond to the terms “animus” and “anima.”

The alchemical technique of illustrating graphically what things “stand” for, or to which “side” the progression goes, is both ingenious and subtle. These graphic tricks also show how flexible and manifold a language and its terms are when the visual space is utilized.

In the foreground of the picture stands a person who is pointing to a furnace. The explanation is simple, because the king, the lion, is going into the fire when he has eaten the snakes poison.

The Egyptian cat and king fought with the snake by the Persea tree, so is written in the *Book of the Dead*. This tree grew in Heliopolis, and here was found the temple where the initiated priest, Thoth, served under the oldest dynasties. By the way the city is now a suburb of Cairo, and its name means “City of the Sun.”

Thoth was considered the father and founder of alchemy, and he later got the Greek-Egyptian name, Hermes Trismegistus.

The Persea tree is the same as the alchemical oak, that is depicted with a golden crown around its trunk. Among the branches of this oak lurks a challenging snake, and it is interesting, that the same snake figures in the bible, where it was poised in a tree in the Garden of Eden. Here was also a man and a woman present just like in alchemy, and the two were to go through the same melting crucible as sun and moon in alchemy.

One is tempted to sometimes speculate whether the story about the snake in the garden of Eden is a fairy tale, that is based upon alchemy. Behind all fairy tales lies a code that is to be broken.

The idea of a snake that alters the course of events is the same in alchemy and religion, but what came first, alchemy or myth? Craft or fairy tale?

There seems to have been a very abstract and almost sophisticated line of thought among the Egyptians and the first alchemists. Our own contemporary “linear” logic often shows to be inadequate, and we have more and more lost the ability to think in images. It only happens in dreams, and that’s why we can’t understand them. The alchemical images are at the same time true archetypical symbols, but only few have discovered this.

It is also a “hard nut to crack,” when one in the *Book of the Dead’s* chapter 72 reads that: “the one who is dead is the double lion god”.

But the old alchemists were not in doubt about what the double lion god meant. It was known all over Europe and symbolized the union of man and woman. In the illustration below is seen the double lion, and it "stands for," that is, stands in front of the wedding couple. Above them is seen the bird, which symbolizes the vapours from the solvent that liberates their souls.

In *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* we are told that the souls are Ra and Osiris united (see chapter 17 introduction). Here stands: "The double divine Soul is the soul of Ra and the Soul of Osiris."

The formulation is quite explicit, so this double soul of the cat Ra and the god/man Osiris united in one body must be the Sphinx. It has its gaze pointed to the east, because that's where sun and moon rise up.

This double soul corresponds to the hermaphroditic being we encounter in alchemy when sun and moon are united. We have seen this man-woman laying on a coffin with a halo of sun and moon around their heads.

Also in our own religion there are allusions to such a hermaphroditic being. In the gospel of Thomas—that theologians avoid as "the cat around the hot porridge" (Danish proverb, the meaning of which should be quite clear)—is to be read: "not before man becomes woman, and woman becomes man, shall they enter the kingdom of God."

Such a disgusting verdict was just a little too much for the clerical authorities, so they swept the gospel of Thomas off the table, just like they did with other just as mysterious gospels, as for example the gospel of Philip.

In *The Book of the Dead* we are told that Ra and Osiris embrace each other, and that divine souls are born in the divine twin gods: "There the one god embraces the other and divine souls spring into being within the divine twin gods." (quoted in English in the original, therefore the repetition)

This is a description of what actually takes place in alchemy. The gold, corresponding to the sun, unites with the liquid, that contains the regenerative power of the moonlight. When heated, white vapours are given of, or "souls," that where described as birds.

In the next illustration we see Ra's and Osiris' souls in the form of birds. Such concepts continued in a long row of European fairy tales, and birds came to form a base for signs (forebodings, warnings. The raven=jeopardy. the owl=disaster) and superstition among the

peasants. But none of us can say we are completely free from these kinds of thoughts, and for some strange reason there is sometimes something to it.

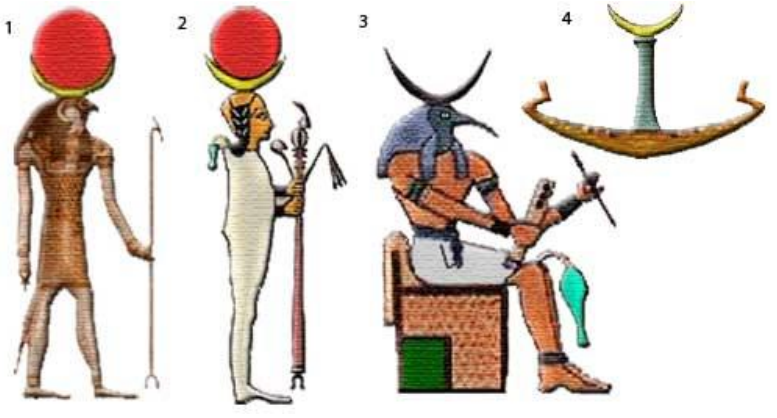
One might finally ask: if the Egyptian religion and alchemy where connected from the beginning, why was this connection expressed in the form of a Sphinx? If it only was about the mystery behind alchemy and religion, it would have been easier to just write it all down—or would it?

The sage Pythagoras has been quoted for saying: "I know truths that nobody would understand!"

This Greek philosopher lived some 500 years before the Christian era, and he founded his doctrines on the old Egyptian religion. His pupils called their master's teachings the wisdom of Hermes or hermetic wisdom, from which stems our expression for something that is sealed off and inaccessible.

This relation is not strange, because the Sphinx in the desert is also a symbol of a divine consciousness that arises when Sun and Moon are united after a long death process, which in alchemy is called "the great wedding."

Consciousness corresponds to "Mercury," messenger of the gods and the winged spirit. Also this symbol is concealed in the Sphinx. Osiris was the moon god in Egypt already 3-4000 years before our era. His symbol was the new moon that in the southern sky looks like a boat on the sea. The sun god and the cat Ra's symbol was the sun.



When these two are united with a cross in a "crucifixion," one gets the symbol of Mercury that represents consciousness: "symbol" (the astrological symbol for Mercury).

So the Sphinx might also mean that a divine consciousness first arises when the mutable moon forces in man are united with the eternal inner fire, the sun.

Thoughts of this kind probably were too much for the common Egyptian, but they spread out over Europe with alchemy and the teachings of the wise Hermes Trismegistus.

The equal armed cross became the symbol of the Cathars, but they were persecuted by the roman church and as good as exterminated in the 13th century.

So there is reason to assume that the roman-catholic authorities feared both alchemy and the esoteric thoughts that where to be found in the old Egyptian religion.

We now also have the final explanation of the Gordian knot in alchemy, the term "Mercury," that no one would reveal. Because it first comes to be when the gold has been dissolved in the "Moon," natures own solvent. They both then become one matter, the hermaphroditic being, while the soul is liberated in the form of vapours, "the bird."

In alchemy the equal armed cross designates the acid that dissolves the matters. Its Latin name is "crux," and from this we have the word for melting crucible "crucibulum." It is this crucible that a soul must pass through to get to the higher consciousness and cognition.

There is an interesting parallel between the Sphinx and the roman-catholic church. The Sphinx is worked directly out of the bedrock on which it rests and therefore bonded to. The bedrock became the symbol of the roman church. It became Peter's church, and Peter means rock, it comes from the Greek "Greek letters."

In our own sceptical and doubting age one might ask: what if everything that was written and told about The Philosopher's Stone, about crucifixion and resurrection, about purification and redemption, and so on, is only a colourful fanciful myth, that was born of Man's despondency and hope?

If this was the case we would wake up to a horrible insight, because then our own religion comes tumbling down. Then there is nothing to build on, because it is the same principles that govern religion and alchemy. If one is wrong, then so is the other, because the contents are the same in both.

Therefore the legend of the Philosopher's Stone must be true, but the point is, that each individual must find the way to it on his/her own.

One even might ask oneself, if the Philosopher's Stone exists and can be made, it could be, that alchemy alone represented the secret underlying everything. Then maybe religion was built upon it like a fairy tale just as all other fairy tales in the world.

In that case man would truly be on his own, left to rely on his own inner powers. Maybe this is the real truth about behind it all, and maybe that was the actual and original reason for the roman church's persecution of the alchemists. But this required that at least some of the popes understood the message of alchemy, and realized the danger it represented.

In the year 389 the precious library in Alexandria was totally devastated by the fanatical Christian emperor Theodosius. Great collections of books from the ancient world ended in the fire, and alchemists were killed or driven out.

There might be yet another explanation for the church's intolerance towards alchemy. The popes knew very well that religion was a power factor, that not only enslaved its subjects, but also amassed great riches to the church. But alchemy made men free and independent from the church.

And this presented a danger to the roman church, because deviants of that kind could not be controlled. They where their own Masters in a very real way.

In Egypt there had been a slow and gradual understanding of what Osiris symbolized. He was forgotten as a moon god, and ended up being synonymous with other gods such as tree gods, grain gods, or gods for domesticated animals and reptiles.

It was a refined culture that ruled in the upper class of ancient Egypt, Wallis Budge tells us in his books about Osiris. But in contrast the common folks were cruel and superstitious, and they even were cannibals that devoured their dead.

This barbaric bent was practised up to our own time, says Wallis Budge, and maybe still exists here and there.

In a papyrus from about 4000 BC it is written that a priest, who was to perform a funeral, should be pure in mind and body. He was not allowed to eat meat from neither animal nor fish. In other words a priest should be a vegetarian. This attitude to our fellow creatures on earth was continued by the Cathars in southern France, and also this was a thorn in the eye of the church, whose attitude to animals was a quite different one.

The old Egypt culture with its aura of gold declined. It had culminated with the erection of the great pyramids on the Giza plateau of which the most famous is the pyramid of Cheops or Khufu.

Both the pyramid and the guarding Sphinx still hide secrets that we never might know. It is as if the greatest riddles about ourselves and our origins must be held secret at any cost. That's why the sage Pythagoras said: "I know truths that nobody can understand."

Maybe they are so terrible that we wouldn't be able to bear them if we knew them.

THE ANCIENT MATTER CLAY

If clay could talk to us like the animals in the fairy tales, it would tell us of a world of unfathomable age and with landscapes where nothing was as it is today.

If one digs a meter down into the ground, one goes about 7000 years back in time, but it is still an earth that contains remnants of manmade history.

But the clay itself bears witness to a nature that existed long before man was around. Clay was originally mountains and cliffs; rocks of granite and feldspar, quartz, and mica, that had slowly eroded and fallen together under the influence of heat, cold and wind.

It took millennia to form the clay. It very slowly became a resilient soft matter where all the original elements: aluminium, silica, potassium, sodium, calcium etc., went into a kind of symbiosis, that again was held together by water.

There has been two things in human history that had a decisive impact, and they are already mentioned in the oldest myths. These two things came from the "red earth," from which man was formed according to the myths. It was clay and iron oxide.

These two things really "created" man, because clay became the material that formed the base for security in life. Clay was manufactured into dwellings, pots, cooking vessels, deities and amulets. But iron was to play an opposing role. It became the seed and cause of insecurity, aggression, fights and wars.

When man learned to extract iron from a common type of iron ore, easily worked (also found in streams in Denmark, who has no ore mines and other iron containing ores) they could expand their territories, dominate and kill. Iron was more suited for that job than both flint axes and bronze weapons.

The humble clay had become mans slave at an early stage, but man became the slave of iron, because when it once had been taken into use, the snowball was rolling and demanded even more weapons. When the god of war Mars entered the stage in the form of iron, was neither man nor animal holy.

But the war god is limp, and as such he is portrayed, because iron is like a boomerang; it strikes back.

And here we still stand today, and in reality nothing has changed. The paradox in this context is, that iron according to the alchemists can be transmuted into gold, but it is man himself that has to perform this process.

It has always been the thought of the alchemists that things were connected in just this manner, and their tracts bear witness to it. In alchemy clay is used as a slave that performs a piece of work to be discarded after it has done its duty.

The German chemist J. R. Glauber from the 17th century has told how clay is used as an intermediate in alchemy for breaking down and rebuilding matters so they take on a new form and new action. The clay is only present as a base for the process, and afterwards it is discarded.

Glauber used clay to produce "spirit of salt," which in our days corresponds to hydrochloride or chloride vapors in water. For various reasons he had many of his works published abroad, and one of his most famous works was issued in Amsterdam in 1651. It was *Opus Minerale,* the work of minerals.

It was issued in France in 1659 together with another script carrying the title, *La Consolation des Navigants.* This script describes, how "spirit of salt" is manufactured with the aid of clay. It is called "esprit de sel" in the text, because it escapes from the clay in the form of a spirit or vapour, that rises up.

Hydrochloride contains the element chlorine, and so does common salt. When this comes into contact with clay it gives of its chlorine, and this takes place via the following process:

One dissolves a good portion of sea salt in boiling water and reduces it to dryness. The salt is then to be dissolved and reduced again some times. It has then changed consistency and has become soft, and it does not crackle when it is approaching dryness.

One then takes a lump of clay, about thrice as much as there is salt. The clay is shaped into little balls the size of a doves egg. These are put in the oven and dried at about 100 degrees centigrade. The balls give of water and become greyish and dry.

They are then put in a concentrated watery solution of the salt one has made. When they have soaked up saltwater for about an hour, they are taken up, and put on a piece of paper to drip off.

Now one needs a distillation set up of the type that has a closed receptacle above the still flask. Because the vapors that are given off by the salt and clay mixture smell extremely unpleasant and also must not be allowed to escape.

One puts the clay balls in the lower flask and pours a little water in the upper one. This water is to absorb the fumes given off by the clay balls.

One then begins to heat, and after some time vapors will rise up that are absorbed by the water in the collector. This water now contains some hydrochloric acid and some hypochloric acid, which is a weaker acid than the hydrochloric acid.

This liquid is to be placed in the lower flask and distilled again, and Glauber suggested that one should put small crushed flint pieces in the flask to prevent the liquid from boiling.

One then heats, and watery vapours will be given off that are condensed in the upper flask. Thereby the "spirit of salt" is condensed, and one gets a liquid that is the mayor constituent of "royal water," that is used to dissolve gold.

Royal water consists of 3 parts hydrochloric acid and one part nitric acid, and this can be made in similar manner, by using clay and potassium nitrate.

Through many years of alchemical labour one cannot avoid experiencing both this and that, and accidents are usually caused by thoughtlessness or ignorance. In medieval scriptures there are often warnings against such states, and it is said straightforwardly, that accidents during lab work is caused by stupidity. They were probably more brash in those days.

I will give some examples of what not to do, if one wants to avoid accidents, or at least keep ones kitchen intact, as most do not have a laboratory at their disposal.

If one is to dissolve metals in acids, this is best done outdoors and at low temperature. One then avoids the worst fumes, but it takes longer time.

If one uses nitric acid, this may never get into contact with organic liquids, like for example turpentine. Only a drop is needed, before the contents explodes. And one should never mix nitric acid with something one does not know what is.

In a book about alchemy, written by a modern American writer, is a description of how an explosion took place, but unfortunately we are not told which two substances were mixed (*Alchemy, pre-Egyptian Legacy*, edited by Richard Grossinger)

The alchemist in the book mixed some substances that gave of flowerlike scents, one reads. But at a point a violent explosion took place, and the scents spread all over the house.

What happened was probably that the alchemist had mixed nitric acid with pure alcohol. Because this forms a so called “ester,” and it is volatile and pleasant smelling. It is actually a kind of perfume, and the flowers in nature use almost the same ingredients. They produce them as we all know on their own; they use weak acids and alcohols, and as the number of combinations are so great, there is a rich variety of scents. Each flower has its own scent.

But if we replicate the process with nitric acid and alcohol, the contents might explode. It also happened for me some years ago.

I had closed the flask with a glass stopper, and the result was an over pressure, that made the flask explode. Glass stoppers are in general unfit, because they can get so stuck, that they can't be removed again.

An alchemist who wrote under the name, Eugenius Philalethes, in the 17th century died from an explosion in his laboratory.

The cause might have been that he mixed ammonium nitrate with ammonium sulphate, which under certain external influences can explode violently.

Ammonium nitrate is used a lot in alchemy because nature herself produces it, so it doesn’t cost anything. And it was the substance that the two persons in *Mutus Liber* got from the dew on the meadow. In dew there is ammonium nitrite, but it is easily converted into ammonium nitrate.

By the way it is a treacherous matter for it can be ignited and burns with a hissing flame.

It is quite interesting that the dangerous substances are the ones used by alchemists, such as nitrates, chloride compounds, sulphur or sulphates. From these matters highly explosive compounds are manufactured, and nature in reality does the same because these matters work through their own inner punching power.

It could also happen that an alchemist accidentally inhaled fumes that made him unconscious. If he heated ammonium nitrate and inhaled the vapours from it, he could easily lose consciousness for some time.

Because when ammonium nitrate is heated, nitrous oxide—also called “laughing gas”—is formed, and this is used today as a mild anaesthetic.

The ammonium ion, that is, ammonium compounded with an acid remnant is one of Nature's strongest tools. The ammonium ion has also been called the Jester of Nature, and in the world of alchemy it is a part of the solvent “Mercury.” It corresponds to the legendary wizard Merlin, Nature's restless wanderer in the great forests.

The ammonium ion can handle almost anything, just like the wizard Merlin. It can even handle the almost un-dissolvable asbestos of our days. Asbestos can be completely dissolved with a matter that has been used for centuries in alchemy, ammonium sulphate.

One dissolves it in water, about 500 grams in 4 liters of water. Then one can either dig a hole for the asbestos in the ground and water it with the solution, or one can put the asbestos in the watery solution of ammonium sulphate. It will slowly be dissolved and become a harmless compound of salts.

POSTSCRIPT—ANOTHER WORLD

Judging by all the old French, German and English scripts that can be found about alchemy, one might get the impression that it was an art only practised in countries beyond our own borders (this is a Danish book). But that was not the case, because alchemy had its practitioners everywhere, but in our country the alchemists went more quietly with it.

On Rosenholm castle by Hornslet in Jutland resided the alchemist Erik Rosenkranz in his day and age. His name itself seems to suggest the red, white and blue roses of alchemy, and perhaps that was no coincidence. We don't know why the family actually got that name.

The alchemist's workshop was probably located in the old "castle kitchen," because it would have been a suitable frame for this kind of activity. It can still be seen in the castle and is absolutely worth a visit.

Rosenholm Castle was erected by Joergen Rosenkrantz between 1559 and 1567, and the saying goes, that both Erik Rosenkrantz the alchemist, and the learned Holger Rosenkrantz sometimes haunt the castles halls and aisles, often accompanied by a white dressed lady. So there are ghosts in Rosenkrantz castle.

Lens-baronesse Carin Rosenkrantz is familiar with her family spooks, but as most members of the aristocracy now, and then, she has accepted that there is more between heaven and earth....

An explanation of the hauntings in old manors and castles might be that there is something to come back to—even for a ghost. Here the winds of history are not dead yet because the roots to the past have not been severed yet.

Here we still meet the traces of another world, and we need them if we are not to lose our souls to an age of concrete and technology.

Here we also find the right settings for the magic and sorcery of alchemy, and even one of its practitioners now and then. Perhaps the alchemist wants to let us know that the Quest for the Philosophers Stone is not ended, and that there is a work that has to be finished.

Images:

Cover: Composite, Crab Nebula, Mercury and Venus

Alchemists at work

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Microcosm diagram of the Mind, Robert Fludd: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Fludd

Mutus Liber, Plate 9

Mutus Liber, Plate 13

Mutus Liber, Plate, 4

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Green Lion, Mylius: http://www.alchemywebsite.com/amclglr3.html

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Merelle gold photos

[Last note: The following paragraph was removed because I (editor@alchemylife.org) could not find any images that correspond to it. Nor could I find any copies or references to, *My Atomic Theory*, by Dr. Phil. Emil Rasmussen, other than by Merelle and Ole Jensen's note in this book.

"Below is shown an example of 8 of the 15 different snowflakes one can encounter. The one in the lower left corner, is the snowflake that only contains oxygen and hydrogen, and which corresponds to the chemical formula we have learned in school. The other snowflakes are composed of completely different gasses."]